Saturday Review

JANUARY 1981 $1.50

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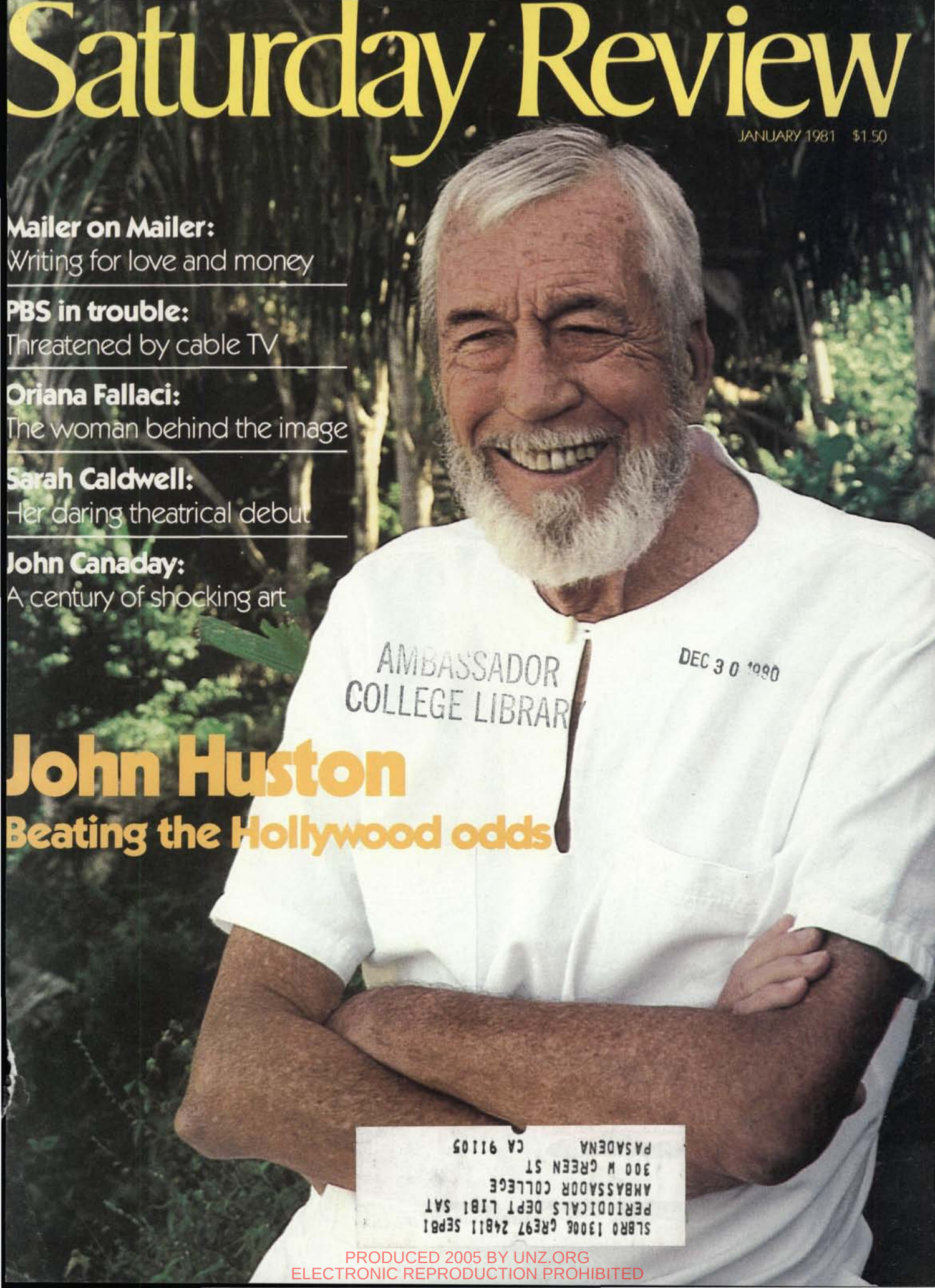
Writing for love and money

PBS in trouble:
Threatened by cable TV

Oriana Fallaci:
The woman behind the image

Sarah Caldwell:
Her daring theatrical debut

John Canaday:
A century of shocking art



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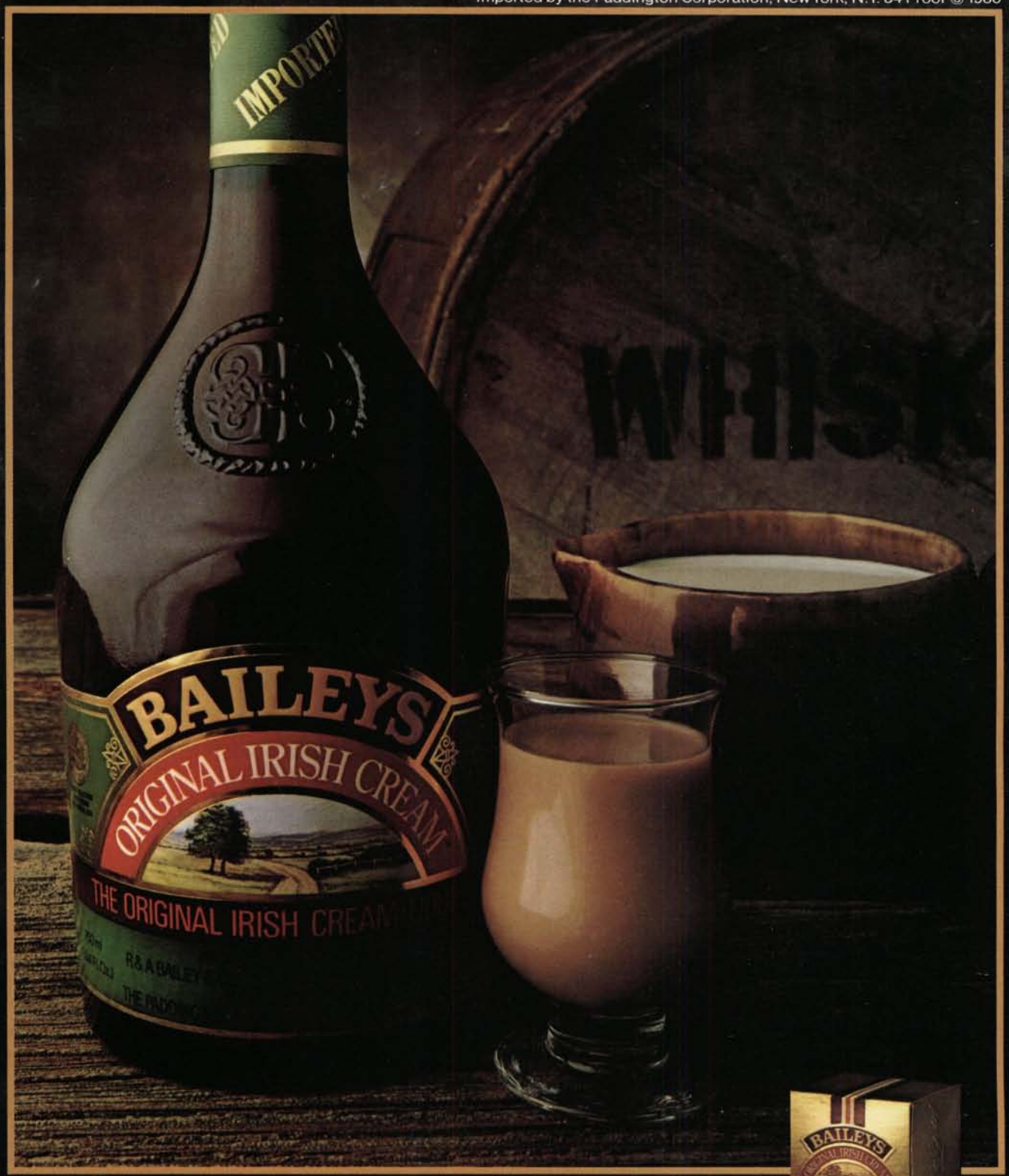

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The numbers are staggering. Every 37 seconds or so a car is stolen somewhere in the U.S. That adds up to almost 800,000 cars a year. But you can do something to keep your car from becoming a statistic. Start by avoiding these four common parking mistakes.

The "Just for a Minute" Syndrome. When you leave your car, even if it's "just for a minute," lock all of the doors and take your keys. In fact, about one of every five cars stolen was left unattended with keys in the ignition. Keep driver's license and vehicle registration cards in your wallet or purse. If a car thief finds these documents in the vehicle's glove box, he can impersonate you if stopped by the police.

The Isolated Location. It's safest to park in a locked garage, but if you can't, don't leave your car in a dark, out-of-the-way spot. Instead, try to park on a busy, well-lighted street. Thieves shy away from tampering with a car if there's a high risk of being spotted.

The Display Case. There's nothing more inviting to a thief than expensive items lying in your car, in plain sight. If you lock these items in the trunk or glove box, there's less incentive for a thief to break in. Also, when you park in a commercial lot or garage, be cautious. Lock your valuables in the trunk, and leave only the ignition key with the attendant.

The Space at the End of the Block. In recent years, professional car-theft operations have become an increasing problem. Unlike amateurs, the professionals are not easily deterred. Cars parked at the end of a block are easy targets for the professional thief with a tow truck. So, it's best to park in the middle of the block. Be sure to turn your steering wheel sharply to one side or the other. That will lock the steering column and prevent the car from being towed from the rear.

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Public land vs. the public welfare

We recently discussed in this space a bill before Congress that would have set aside huge tracts of Alaskan wilderness without even determining how much oil, gas, and other usable resources they contained. When Congress returned, an Alaska Lands Act was passed.

But what happens in Alaska is only a prelude to the much broader issue that encompasses federal land policy in 11 Western states and on half a billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off our shores. The vast majority of this land—much of it a potential source of energy deposits—has never been opened to exploration. Some of it, under current rules, may never be.

Right now, some 11 million acres of the federally-controlled OCS are under lease—roughly two percent of the government's holdings. Yet, last year these tracts accounted for nine percent of the country's domestically produced crude oil and natural gas liquids and nearly a quarter of its natural gas.

True, large areas of the OCS, even if explored, would probably yield nothing more than dry holes. But some of the most prospective areas—off Alaska and Southern California, for example—have either been withdrawn from individual sales or put on the back burner by government officials. And that's a luxury this nation can ill afford.

Even in those areas where exploration is possible, red tape and long delays are built into the leasing process. Generally, some three to four years go by from the time the government asks the oil companies what areas they're interested in until a lease sale takes place.

After the blocks are auctioned off, months—even years—may pass before all the drilling permits can be obtained. Sometimes, as in the case of the Georges Bank acreage in the Atlantic, the same environmental arguments for delay that bogged down the lease sale—only to be rejected by government or court officials—reappear a second time to slow the start-up of drilling. We don't question the need for safeguards critical to the preservation of the offshore environment. But policies which simply delay energy development without helping the environment serve no one's interest.

Onshore, federal energy policies are equally unproductive. As of mid-1980, only 13.5 percent of the 775 million acres of government-owned land were under lease for oil and gas operations. In Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana, huge sections of the promising Overthrust Belt—a geological region where there have been recent major discoveries of oil and gas—are effectively closed to exploration. In Alaska, except for the North Slope, most of the high-potential onshore areas have been tested sparingly, if at all—because of federal restrictions. And harsh requirements for federal oil shale leasing have made it extremely difficult to develop these resources on government lands in Utah and Colorado. In view of the administration's $88-billion commitment to synthetic fuel development, a speed-up is long overdue.

These counterproductive federal policies result from a woeful lack of coordination. For years, competing government agencies—the Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and National Forest Service—have been carrying out different land withdrawal programs in line with their own special interests. But who, we wonder, looks at the whole picture, including the nation's energy needs, and puts in a word for the public interest?

We have no argument with those who call for wildlife preserves and national parks. But oil and gas exploration leave the wilderness basically unaffected. Seismic surveys, using acoustic waves, leave virtually no trace on the environment. The occasional exploratory well that is drilled can easily be plugged when its purpose is served and the surface area can be restored. And other land uses which are also restricted—timber production and grazing, for instance—have minimal environmental impact. Can we really afford to ban careful exploration and development of the resources in large segments of our public lands at a time when the country desperately needs more domestically produced energy?

Government geologists say as much as 40 percent of the nation's undiscovered oil and natural gas may lie on unexplored public lands. It's time to look for it.

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Woody Allen

As a long-standing fan of filmmaker/writer/actor Woody Allen, I thoroughly enjoyed "Creators on Creating" [November]. Robert Moss portrayed "the creator" with wonderful candor. The interview captured Mr. Allen's special charisma and lent insight to his seldom disputed talent: the ability to hold an Allen-ized mirror to society and brilliantly satirize the reflection.

Beth Ricci
Berkeley, California

TV News: 60 Minutes Responds

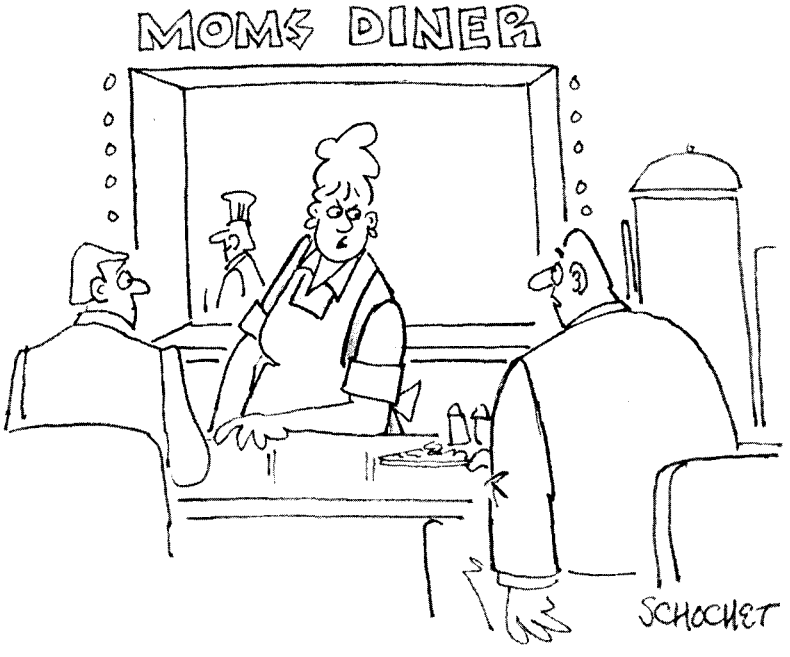
Peter Funt contends in his article "Television News: Seeing Isn't Believing" [November] that, "*Sixty Minutes* relies more on the editing process than any other program on television both in ratio of film shot to film actually used in the restructuring of questions and answers. . . ."

Everyday, newscasts both local and network shoot vast amounts of film and tape and use only snippets on the air. Some documentaries compile a greater ratio of footage shot to footage used than other documentaries. Our ratio is, as a rule, smaller than a lot of other news broadcasts.

Regarding the "restructuring of questions and answers," I would suggest that no one, even Mr. Funt, submits for publication everything that was said during an interview. A good reporter uses quotations that he thinks accurately reflect the sense of the story he is after. If he doesn't, he is a good transcriber, not a good reporter. Mr. Funt, it turns out, is neither. Although our entire as-broadcast transcript [of the interview at Franklin Mint] was available to him, he pointedly and dishonestly omitted from his quotes a portion of that transcript that would have rendered invalid his version of how we treated Franklin Mint.

Don Hewitt
Executive Producer
60 Minutes
New York, New York

Peter Funt replies: Don Hewitt's comments notwithstanding, my report in *Saturday Review* is accurate. One particular sentence in Mr. Hewitt's letter, however, brings into focus the very point he apparently missed in my discussion of television editing. He states: "A good reporter uses quotations that he thinks accurately reflects the sense of the story he is after." I disagree. A good reporter uses quotes that accurately reflect the *truth* about the story he is trying to *examine*.



"Finish it!"

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LETTERS

Failure to make this distinction in the editing room occasionally mars the otherwise excellent *60 Minutes* program.

Peter Funt's article came as no surprise to me. Last fall, *60 Minutes* televised a segment on the construction problems occurring at a nuclear-power plant being built by the Illinois Power Company. To protect its own interests, the company videotaped the *60 Minutes* interviews, then produced a videotape giving its side of the story. The tape revealed not only the distortions of the original interview, but also misstatements of fact by the interviewer that showed a lack of understanding of the intricacies of the subject. It's obvious that we should apply our skepticism of the print media to television as well.

Bruce J. Benedict
Lynchburg, Virginia

From a Housewife Novelist

Despite the liberation he espouses in his article, "The Rise of the Housewife Novelist" [November], Ross Wetzsteon condescends to these women and to me. He fantasizes about the "emptiness and pathos of the constricted lives from which so many of them are trying to escape," without acknowledging that these lives lead them to their craft. He diminishes Elaine Fantle Shimberg's book to a housewifery manual, which it is not. The book is no Bible, but many of the ideas offer good management procedures about which housewife/ writers may be ignorant.

Mr. Wetzsteon, to put it politely, is *wrong*. Those of us who write do so not because our lives are meaningless, but to extend ourselves to others. None of the novels he describes was written in a vacuum; is any of them less meaningful because it was conceived at home, rather than in the marketplace?

Bridget Balthrop Morton
Melbourne, Florida

My response to Ross Wetzsteon's article is one of disquietude and fury. My mother taught at the University of Chicago and Cornell University. Was she a housewife/professor? I have raised three children while supporting us with a graphics design career. Am I a housewife/graphics designer? The notion that women are too feeble to organize their creative lives around improving husbands and children is absurd. We've been doing it for centuries. *Haiti Prentiss*
East Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia

A Critical Traveler

I'm enjoying the new *Saturday Review* very much, especially the extended coverage given to travel. There's more to visiting new places than staying in top hotels and eating in fine restaurants. Museums, concerts, etc., are equally important to the success of a vacation.

I must take issue, however, with the coverage given to the Ringling Museum in Sarasota, an overblown reproduction of a Venetian palace ["A Sarasota Celebration," November]. When one has to wend one's way through such an excess of ornamentation, statuary and colonnades, it's hard to take such a museum seriously as a repository of fine art. *Sara Bumford*
New York, New York

Honoring Walt Whitman

Congratulations to Donald Hall for once again ringing the gong with his review of Justin Kaplan's biography of Whitman ["The Search for Walt Whitman," November], in which he correctly names Whitman "the greatest of our poets." *Jim McCurry*
Wataga, Illinois

The "Chairperson" Fuss

What a fuss Thomas Middleton makes about Chairperson [November]. It makes one wish to be a plumber or a President, something without a lot of gender. Surely he didn't mean to support the use of Madame Chairman on the idea that language should *never* change. Some traditions deserve to die—like women being declared legal chattel.

I think the answer lies in whether a word refers to a person's sex or occupation. It's not that a woman wants her psyche or her style mollycoddled, but that she would prefer to do her job without a mustache. I can't help but notice that when I read about a man who decides to forsake the office to tend house, he never calls himself a housewife; he changes the title to husband, as if he felt it odd to switch gender. *V. Valiska Gregory*
Indianapolis, Indiana

Note: The picture that appeared on page 14 of Walter Terry's article "Can Baryshnikov Star as Impressario?" [December] was from the American Ballet Theatre's *Swan Lake.*

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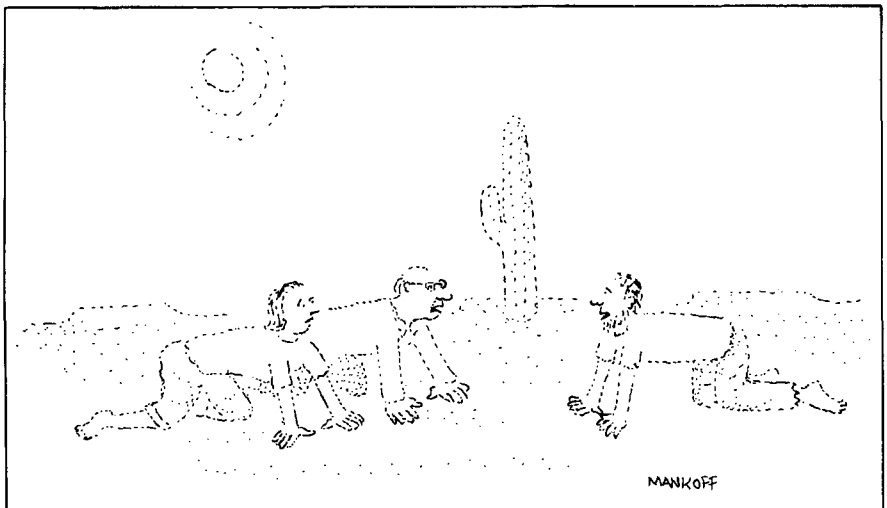

"We lost all our traveler's checks!" "That's too bad. What kind were they?"

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EDITORIAL

The Threat of Intolerance

The 1980 presidential election was significant not just because of its decisiveness but because religious forces, under the name of the "Moral Majority," played a major role in the outcome. This is not to say that there is anything wrong in the involvement by religious groups in public questions. During the 1960s, for example, many denominations helped to bring about essential change by coming together on moral and social issues.

The difference between what happened in the 1960s and what happened in 1980 is that the Moral Majority movement in the recent election did not merely encourage people to become active in behalf of their religious convictions. It sought to establish itself as a power over government. It is in this context that the Moral Majority needs to be scrutinized. For it is on a collision course with the American tradition that draws a line between religious influence and religious control.

The American Founding Fathers—the term conjures up images of graying and grandfatherly old men but their average age was in the mid-thirties—had highly developed ideas about the role of religion in society. Many of them or their ancestors came to America to free themselves of political rule by religious forces. They could bear personal witness to the way religion becomes inimical to itself and to a nation when it occupies a position of political power. In separating religion from politics they did not intend that it would not be concerned with political issues. What they sought to do was to keep it from being a prime authority in the affairs of government or a center for dictating an individual's vote.

Freedom of religion, as the Founding Fathers saw it, was not just the right to associate oneself with a certain denomination but the right to dissociate without penalty. Belief or nonbelief was a matter of individual choice—a right underwritten in the basic charter of the nation's liberties. Religions should be barred from any official political status.

They were a fascinating breed, these young Constitution-makers. They were products of the period of the Enlightenment, avowed rationalists, probers of the connection between cause and effect in freedom, highly developed spiritually both in the moral content of their political ideas and in their realization that something lay beyond human power and human comprehension that called for respect. It was only when this transcendent reality sought to be institutionalized that they became concerned—concerned in the sense that they knew that religions sought to speak in the name of truth but that, since there were different religions, truth could become competitive and even combustible. Therefore, the duty of government was to make truth a private rather than an official matter. People could select their truths as they could select anything else in a society that knew it had to be protected against autocracy in any form—political, social, ecclesiastical.

The writer, perhaps more than any of his fellow artists, has access to the human subconscious. His words sink deep.

By and large, our literature tends to mirror this open view. The religious convictions of our people are reflected rather than advocated. The range of those ideas runs all the way from H.L. Mencken's scoffing in his *Heathen Days* to William Faulkner's religious allegory, *The Fable*—a novel, incidentally, seldom mentioned by critics but one that he himself considered his most important work.

We can learn a lot from our literature about the need to keep religious authority out of political activity. For the writer is most effective when he transmits his own perceptions of life and human experience rather than his advocacy of an institutionalized interpretation of the great unanswered questions.

The writer, perhaps more than any of his fellow artists, has access to the human subconscious. His words sink deep, shaping dreams, easing the pain of loneliness, banishing incantations and omens, keeping alive the memories of the race, providing intimations of immortality, nourishing great anticipations, sharpening the instinct for justice, and imparting respect for the fragility of life. These functions are essential for human evolution. Without them, civilization becomes brittle and breaks easily. Society can be measured, therefore, not by the display of power but by its attention to the conditions of creativity and by its acceptance of human sovereignty as the highest value.

One can recognize the right and indeed the duty of any individual or group in the society to act in behalf of its moral convictions. But such actions have to stay within clearly defined limits. The moment religious forces seek to control government rather than to influence it they threaten the very society they seek to protect. **—N.C.**

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JANUARY SPOTLIGHTS

Hoffman's statue of Pavlova in *La Peri*.

Dance

When Anna Pavlova traveled to America at the beginning of the century, she came to a country in which ballet had been out of favor for over 60 years. She toured extensively, giving a succession of one-night stands in everything from vaudeville houses to concert halls, popularizing her art and inflaming young aspiring breasts with her performances of that most famous of all dance solos, *The Dying Swan*.

Now, on the 100th anniversary of her birth, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the San Francisco Ballet celebrate the great ballerina in their exhibition **Pavlova!** Photographs, set designs, sketches—some by Pavlova herself—and sculpture will be on display. But best of all, the Palace will present a film, *The Immortal Swan*, that offers a compendium of clips showing Pavlova herself on and off stage. (January 31 through April 26.)

Film

Forty years before Kubrick's *2001*, Abel Gance invented what he called "Polyvision," a three-screen progenitor of Cinerama, for his five-hour masterwork, **Napoleon**. Gance's epic on the life of the Little Corporal won him a standing ovation at its premiere at the Paris Opera in 1927, but since that time it has been rarely seen in its entirety. Bits and pieces lay ignominiously scattered about the film archives of Europe until the vigilant detective work of film historian Kevin Brownlow, in an 11-year, $40,000-effort, reassembled what he hopes is a definitive version.

Francis Ford Coppola's Zoetrope Studios, together with the Film Society of Lincoln Center and Images Film Archive, will present the American premiere of the complete *Napoleon* for three showings at New York City's Radio City Music Hall. Coppola, père, who won an Oscar for his *Godfather* score, will compose a live orchestral accompaniment. Albert Dieudonne and W. Roudenko share the role of Bonaparte. Gina Mares performs Josephine. Cinematography is by Jules Kruger. Abel Gance, just turned 91, will attend the revival if health permits. (January 23, 24, 25.)

Art

In Paris in the 1880s, painting took a significant step toward abstraction as many artists, among them Vincent van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Paul Gauguin, and Emile Bernard, adopted a style of painting tagged "cloisonism" by a contemporary critic. The style is recognizable for its bold, simplified definition of form, and flat, broad use of color. The term notes a similarity to cloisonné enamel technique, and to medieval stained-glass windows with their flat planes of color outlined darkly in lead.

For **Vincent van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism**, presented by the Art Gallery of Ontario in conjunction with

Dieudonne as Napoleon charts the future Republic in Gance's rediscovered epic.

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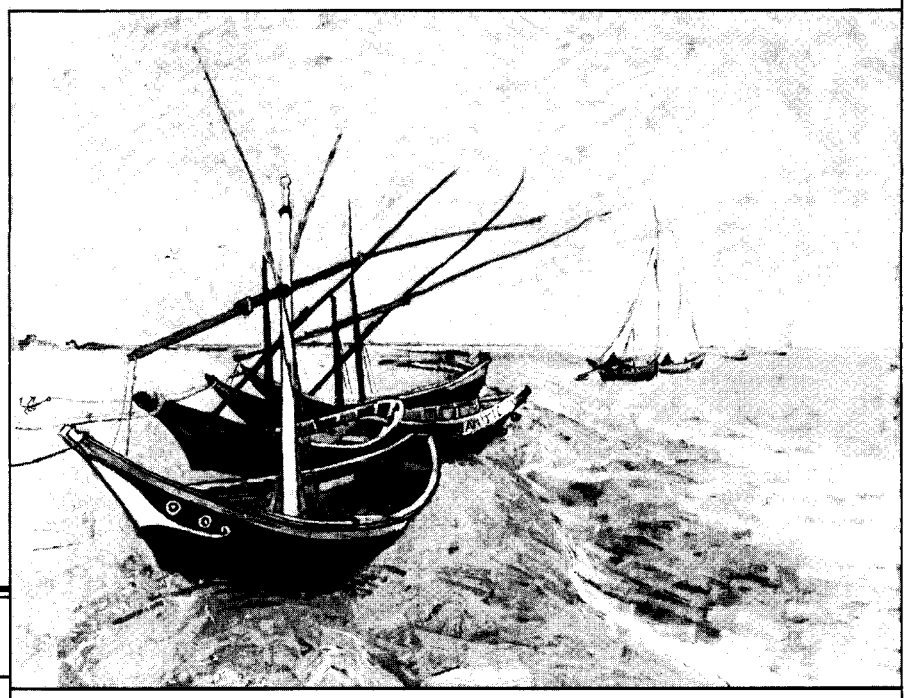
the Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh in Amsterdam, some 145 works have been assembled from public and private collections throughout the world. A few of the selections: van Gogh's "La Bereuse," "The Yellow House," and "The Sunflowers"; Gauguin's "Self-Portrait," "Les Miserables," "Agony in the Garden," and "The Loss of Virginity"; and Bernard's "Breton Women in a Field." The show will travel from Toronto to the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum next spring. (Toronto: January 24 through March 22. Amsterdam: April 9 through June 14.)



Van Gogh's "Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer" from Ontario's cloisonism show.

Photography

From the Spanish Civil War to Vietnam, much of our vision of history comes to us through the camera of **Robert Capa**. In Andalusia, on the battlefields of Europe, in Hanchow and Indochina, in the midst of the shooting and bombing, Capa was there, clicking away, recording for the world the bitter realities of war. Photographer Edward Steichen said of Capa, "[He] knew and hated war. In his vivid, factual photographs he recorded its horror and monstrous stupidity with the same fervor and passion revealed in Goya's famous etchings, 'The Disasters of War'."

Robert Capa's "Spain, 1937," from the ICP exhibit.

This month, The International Center of Photography in New York City will present an exhibition of the Spanish Civil War photographs by Capa, his wife Gerda Taro, and his lifelong friend and a respected photojournalist in his own right, David Seymour - "Chim." The exhibition will include Capa's famous picture of the loyalist soldier at the moment he was hit by a bullet, and many photographs never before seen in this country. (January 24 through February 22.)

Theater

After out-of-town tryouts in San Diego and Denver—the West Coast equivalents of Broadway's New Haven and Philadelphia—Ernest Thompson's new play, **West Side Waltz**, starring Katharine Hepburn and Dorothy Loudon, will open at the Los Angeles Music Center for a month's engagement. Hepburn, who comes to the play directly from acting opposite Henry Fonda in the film version of Thompson's Broadway comedy *On Golden Pond*, is reportedly learning to play the piano for her new role.

The story concerns three women of different generations, their insights into life, old age, and loneliness. The rest of the cast includes David Margolis, Don Howard, and Regina Baff. If *Waltz* is a success in L.A., it will move East for another set of tryouts before opening on Broadway. (January 21-March 14.)

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How Huston Beats the Hollywood Odds

by Gregg Kilday

By all the rules of Hollywood, director John Huston should have been corralled into retirement years ago. Yet at 74—an age when most of his contemporaries have been relegated to the sidelines—Huston is still directing movies, and directing them with a vengeance. At the moment, he has two films awaiting release—*Phobia*, a Canadian horror film that he churned out when no American studio would insure him following his heart surgery three years ago; and *Escape to Victory*, a brawling, World War II soccer movie starring Sylvester Stallone and Michael Caine, which was shot last year in Hungary. In May, Huston begins filming his 37th movie, *Annie*, a movie version of the long-running Broadway musical about the ever cheerful, quintessential foundling, Little Orphan Annie.

The fact that Huston is still making films at all is astonishing and not so easy to explain. For even though his canon includes classics (*The Maltese Falcon*, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, *The African Queen*) and other films less commonly praised but nonetheless fascinating (*Moulin Rouge*, *Moby Dick*, *Freud*), Huston has also had his share of thoroughgoing disasters, most of them in the last 15 years (*Sinful Davey*, *A Walk With Love and Death*, *The Kremlin Letter*). True, three of his films from the Seventies were critically applauded (*Fat City*, *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Wise Blood*), but his name on a marquee is no guarantee of box-office success. Moreover, mere experience has never counted for much in Hollywood, where longevity itself is suspect. In the motion-picture industry, to be praised as a "survivor" is to be written off. Instead of giving jobs to Hollywood's veteran filmmakers, the corporate moguls who preside over the New Hollywood would rather honor them just with awards.

The consequences on occasion are as darkly ironic as they were in 1975 when the American Film Institute bestowed its annual Life Achievement Award on Orson Welles. Welles, then 60, endured the encomiums gracefully at the requisite black-tie industry dinner, accepting the award "in the name of all mavericks" while gently chiding the complacent executives who rose to their feet in his honor by saying that the decision to celebrate a filmmaker as prodigal as he was "a tribute to all of you with fixed addresses." Then, taking the opportunity to audition his work in progress, Welles offered a preview of his unfinished film, *The Other Side of the Wind*. In Welles's film, Huston stars as a legendary, Hemingwayesque movie director who, in a Pirandellian twist of fate paralleling Welles's own predicament, is seen struggling to find financing to complete his latest film. Dutifully, the assembled studio brass applauded the film clip—and then filed out of the ballroom. Nobody stepped forward to offer Welles the financing he needed to finish his film, and to this day, the movie remains uncompleted.

"Hollywood has never appealed to me as a way of life. I don't like talking about motion pictures or who's going to get what part. To me that's a bore."

The Seventies proved no less trying for most of the movie industry's other senior directors. As studio executives rushed to cash in on the raucously lucrative youth market, senior filmmakers, whose reputations were made in the Fifties and early Sixties, were elbowed aside: The late George Stevens, William Wyler, Fred Zinneman, and Billy Wilder—all four were singled out by *Time* magazine as the industry's four preeminent directors in 1960—completed only a handful of movies during the Seventies.

Stevens died, at 71, in 1975. After *The Liberation of L.B. Jones* in 1970, William Wyler settled into retirement. Although he managed to film two features during the past decade—*The Day of the Jackal* and *Julia*—Fred Zinneman was defeated in his attempts to bring *Man's Fate* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* to the screen. Bitterly dramatizing the problems of the aging filmmaker in his 1979 film, *Fedora*, Billy Wilder spoke through the character of a disenfranchised producer, played by William Holden, who is forced to travel around Europe, script for a remake of *Anna Karenina* clutched in his hand, hoping to secure international financing for a project that will probably never get made. At one point, overcome by the effort, the defeated producer breaks down and inveighs against the New Hollywood where "the bearded ge-

(Opposite) John Huston at his home—a Mexican retreat accessible only by boat.

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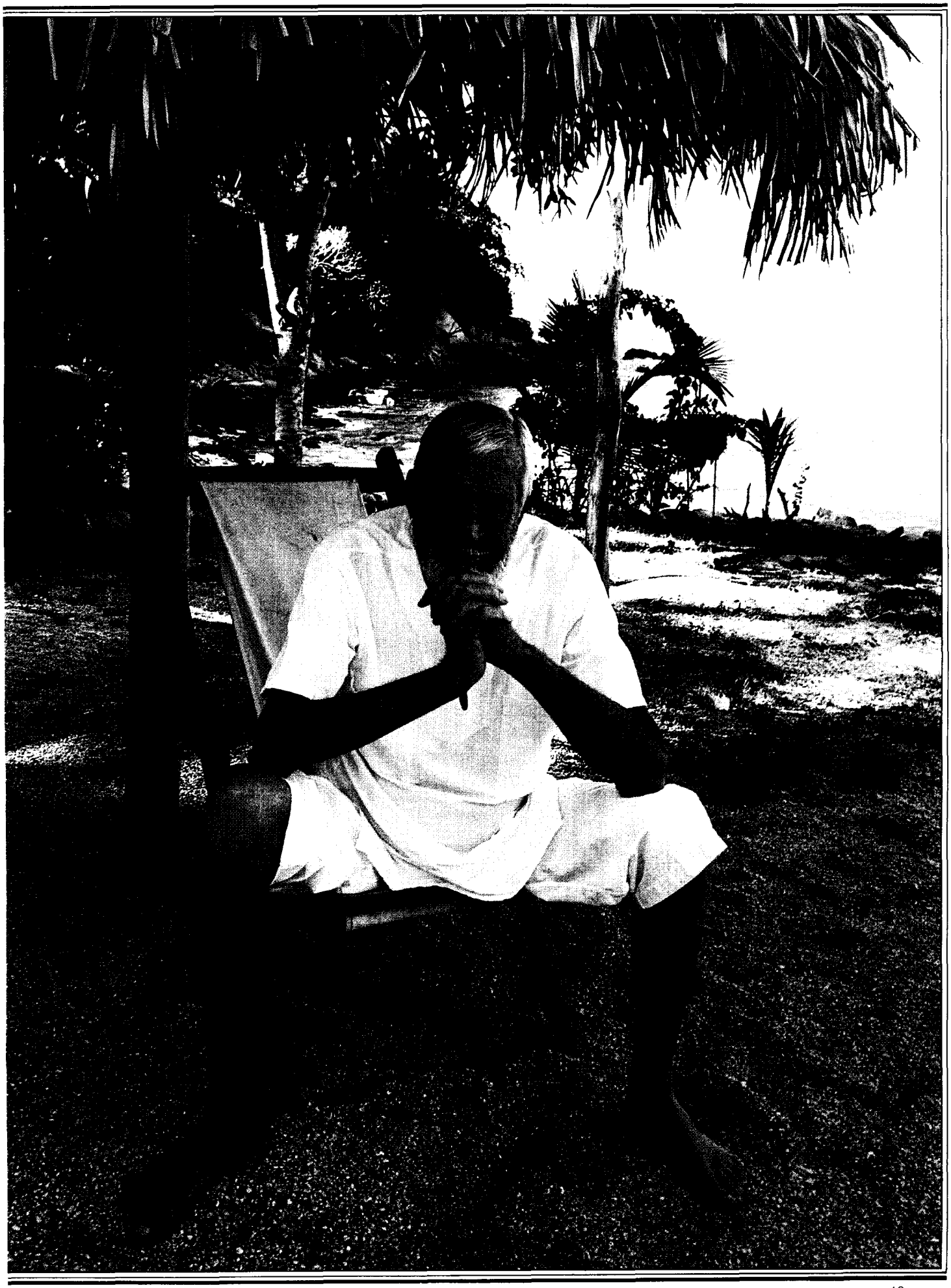

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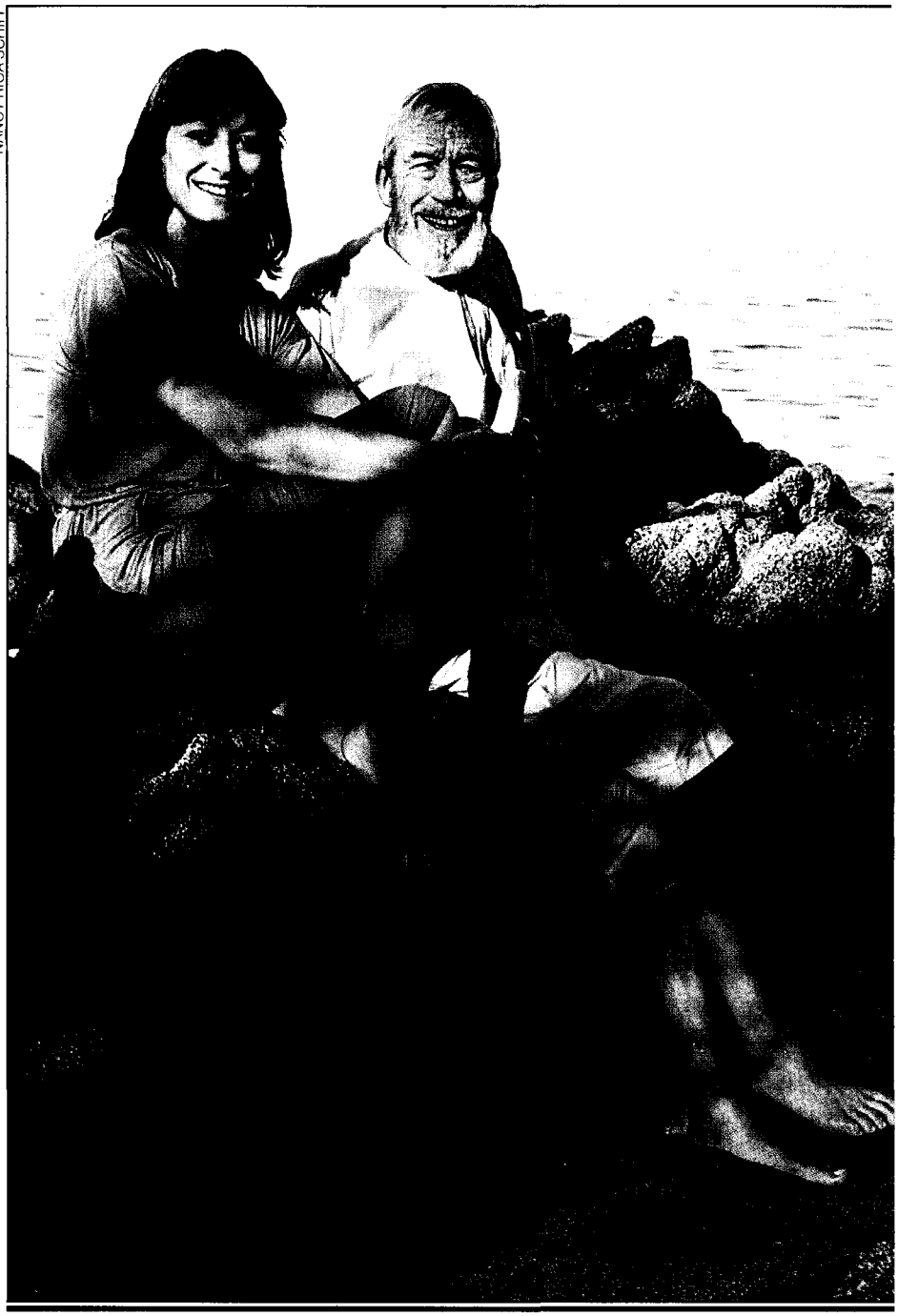
niuses have taken over with their hand-held cameras."

Huston, who's only a month younger than Wilder, looks no more kindly upon the callow, young executives who now sit in judgment at the studios. "Yes, I've had one or two harrowing encounters with them, listening to them talk," Huston says, punctuating the statement with a look of long-suffering annoyance that passes like a momentarily troublesome storm cloud across his wintry, weathered face. Sitting in a suite at the Beverly Hills Hotel during a recent visit to Los Angeles from his current home in Mexico—typically the room is cluttered not with scripts but with an eclectic assortment of books ranging from *The Selected Letters of James Joyce* to a study on Manet—Huston expresses his distaste for Hollywood and its discontents. "I don't like living in Beverly Hills," Huston pronounces in a voice that is almost liturgical in its sonority. "I don't like the things that one does, particularly. There are people here that I like very much. But it's never appealed to me as a way of life. I don't like talking about motion pictures, necessarily, and speculating on who's going to get what part. The behavioral habits of actors don't enthrall me. And I think there's a tendency on the part of picture-makers to cannibalize themselves. You begin to make motion pictures about motion pictures. To me that's a bore."

But unlike his contemporaries who appear to relish Hollywood, Huston is still making movies. By the end of the Sixties—after a string of financial and critical flops—Huston looked like he, too, was on the ropes. But he bounced back in 1972 with the gritty fight picture *Fat City*, and in 1975, after dreaming about the project for nearly 20 years, he finally made his movie version of the Rudyard Kipling tale *The Man Who Would Be King*, spinning a rousing adventure film every bit the equal of his early masterpieces. Then, in 1977, it looked like it might all slip away again, when Huston was hospitalized for surgery to relieve an aneurysm of the aorta. "Well, I thought it might be the end of everything," Huston chuckles when asked if he feared the operation meant an end to his career. (It did force him to give up the directorial reins on the Charles Bronson thriller *Love and Bullets*.) "But if you recover from that you're as good as new," Huston says of the ordeal. "In fact, you're slightly better than new. Of course, I couldn't do anything for several months. And then *Wise Blood* came along."

NANCY RICA SCHIFF



Like her grandfather Walter, Angelica Huston—relaxing above with her father John at his Villa near Puerto Vallarta—has chosen acting as a career.

While he was recuperating at his jungle villa south of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Huston was visited by a young man named Michael Fitzgerald, the son of Robert Fitzgerald, the Harvard professor and literary executor for the late Flannery O'Connor. Although he had never produced a movie before, Michael Fitzgerald proposed a screen version of O'Connor's first novel, *Wise Blood*, a gothic parable about sin and salvation. Huston read the book and gave Fitzgerald his blessing and the neophyte producer went off to try to raise the necessary money.

Eventually, Fitzgerald found the $2 million needed to shoot the movie. By any standard, it was a minuscule budget—the sort of offer that even a recent film-school grad might refuse. But Huston brought the film in under schedule and under budget. When *Wise Blood* had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 1979, it was an immediate critical hit.

Huston was not yet in the clear, however. Although he had demonstrated that he still possessed his old facility for making movies, he still had to prove that he had his strength as well before the major studios would stop viewing

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him as a risk. And so when he was asked to step in and sort out the confusions surrounding *Phobia*, he agreed. From all reports, *Phobia* is a routine thriller, a sort of *Ten Little Indians* set in an insane asylum. Some auteurist somewhere will probably claim that it follows in the tradition of Huston's 1946 documentary on psychiatry, *Let There Be Light*, and his 1963 biofilm, *Freud*, but Huston himself does not consider *Phobia* a true "John Huston film."

That distinction must be reserved for *Escape to Victory*, a World War II drama set in a prison camp where a group of Allied officers led by Michael Caine and Sylvester Stallone challenge the Germans to a game of soccer, which will be released this summer, marking Huston's real return to the big time.

In contrast, *Annie* is a complete departure from anything he has done before. "It amuses me," Huston says of *Annie* with a triumphant smile. "It's so simple. Everything in it has been brought down to the irreducible minimum. It's pure feeling. And although I want to straighten out a few historical facts that the musical's book got wrong, I don't really want to change it.

"I know some directors say that you should never direct children or animals. Well, that comes from somebody who doesn't understand animals. In the first place, I think little girls are animals, and if you understand animals, they are the easiest things in the world to direct." After all, Huston recalls, he trained all those animals to march along two-by-two in *The Bible*.

Still, to recount Huston's most recent gambits is hardly to explain his talent for survival. A part of the explanation may be found in Huston's surprisingly nonchalant attitude toward directing as a career. In his recently published autobiography, *An Open Book*, Huston claims, "I don't think of myself as simply, uniquely and forever a director of motion pictures. It is something for which I have a certain talent, and a profession the disciplines of which I have mastered over the years, but I also have a certain talent for other things, and I have worked at those disciplines as well. The idea of devoting myself to a single pursuit in life is unthinkable to me. My interests in boxing, writing, painting, horses have at certain periods in my life been every bit as important as that in directing films." In Hollywood, as elsewhere, luck favors those who don't need it.

Another part of the explanation may be found in Huston's formidable personal reputation, which has given him stature and appeal, even at those times when his movies were failing. Being the son of the celebrated actor Walter Huston earned him a certain notoriety when he first came to Hollywood in the Thirties to work as a screenwriter. By then Huston had already knocked about as a boxer, a cavalryman, a playwright, a painter, a journalist, and an actor; he had explored Mexico and he had been down and out in Paris and London. His hard-drinking exploits on the Hollywood party circuit and a couple of car crashes that got into the newspapers laid the groundwork for the tumultuous image he still retains as a man's man, a roustabout and a romantic.

But the Huston legend didn't begin to coalesce until James Agee wrote his famous *Life* magazine profile in 1948, celebrating Huston as "one of the ranking grasshoppers of the Western Hemisphere." Having filmed *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* entirely on location in Mexico, Huston was already set in his peripatetic ways. A brush with the House Un-American Activities Committee—along with Bogart and Bacall, Huston went to Washington as part of the Committee for the First Amendment to protest HUAC's activities—only confirmed Huston's predilection for making movies abroad and eventually contributed to his renouncing his American citizenship in 1964 to become an Irish citizen and settle in Ireland.

Various buildings at Huston's Mexican home house his secretary, her secretary, a family of pigs, and a parrot.

Despite his constant traveling, Huston never suffered for lack of a "fixed address"—his kinship with Welles notwithstanding. For the last six years his home has been a bayside villa near Puerto Vallarta—a collection of half a dozen buildings hemmed in by Mexican jungle clinging to the side of a mountain. The buildings are little more than shelters. One serves as a kind of mess hall for everyone in residence; another houses Huston's secretary; a third is used by *her* secretary; a fourth is occupied by a family of pigs; a fifth—a glorified cage—by a parrot. The only way to reach Huston's retreat is by boat.

But the press has helped shape Huston's legend by reporting more often on his travels than on his homes. Whenever he would arrive in Los Angeles or New York, the local reporters noted his latest itinerary. "John Huston, a man who dies of boredom if he can't keep hysterically busy at least 18 hours a day, hit New York the other day from the Canary Islands on his way to India," began a typical report in *Life*.

At times, the legend has threatened to run away from him. In *Picture*, her account of the studio battles surrounding *The Red Badge of Courage*, Lillian Ross portrayed Huston as a quixotic gentleman who walked out on the picture in the middle of post-production in order to make *The African Queen*. Picking up the story in his novel *White Hunter, Black Heart*, a fictionalized version of the making of *The African Queen*, Peter Viertel painted an even grimmer portrait, transforming Huston into an hysterical monster chasing after his own private adventures at whatever the cost to the movie under his command. Unlike Otto Preminger, who made it a point of honor to stay and stand guard over his movies until they were released, Huston has sometimes seemed all too eager to cast off semi-completed movies, which have then been mutilated by producers, studios, and distributors. Given the choice, Huston would just rather go on to the next movie over the horizon—and although he has left abandoned movies in his wake, he has never given up the quest.

For the most part, critics and reviewers have looked on Huston indulgently. His escapades—including his five marriages and assorted liaisons—may have earned him his reputation as a maverick, but unlike Welles, the image didn't spill over into his work, where he is known as an efficient, pragmatic craftsman.

Huston survives in Hollywood today in part because of his efficient craftsmanship; in part because he has never needed Hollywood—an attitude the film colony always finds subversively attractive; in part because of his huge personal reputation and, despite that, his willingness to take risks (as he did

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MOVIE STAR NEWS

Treasure of the Sierre Madre: Tim Holt, Walter Huston, Humphrey Bogart (1948).

MOVIE STAR NEWS

Huston (left) directing Montgomery Clift in the title role of *Freud* (1962).

TOM ZIMBEROFF/SYGMA

Huston on location last year with Sylvester Stallone making *Escape to Victory*.

with *Wise Blood* and as he is doing, in a different way, with *Annie*); and in part because of his headstrong determination to keep making movies, moguls and medics be damned.

But more important than all of these is that Huston's movies over four decades have managed always to feel contemporary, while retaining a distinctive Huston stamp. *Fat City* and *Wise Blood* tell their stories in elliptical, contemplative styles that belong peculiarly to the Seventies. They *feel* like Seventies movies in a way that Billy Wilder's *Fedora*, for instance, does not. In short, whenever Hollywood and John Huston get back together, the outcome is never quite predictable. It is this sense of adventure that Huston brings to all his projects—whatever the strictures of budgets and schedules—combined with a track record that includes undeniably brilliant films which keeps bringing Huston new assignments.

It's no surprise that when Huston finally found the time to talk his autobiography, he produced a book that is less a true confessions than it is a compendium of all the anecdotes he has ever told about himself throughout his long career. Huston has prevailed through the force of his own personality, and now that he has returned to his old vigor, even his few detractors have begun to register second thoughts: Film critic Andrew Sarris, who once dismissed Huston for "coasting on his reputation as a wronged individual with an alibi for every bad movie," took the occasion of last year's American Film Society tribute to Huston to write, "What I have always tended to underestimate in Huston was how deep in his guts he could feel the universal experience of pointlessness and failure."

John Huston still doesn't like to admit that he works very hard. And in between visitors and phone calls at the Beverly Hills Hotel, he talks about heading back to Mexico for a stay before he has to settle down to complete the final cut of *Escape to Victory* and begin all the preproduction meetings on *Annie*. But although he cultivates his standing as a grasshopper, he is as shrewd as any ant. Actor Dennis Morgan once said of Huston, "John, I think, wrote his life as a script when he was very young, and he has played it ever since." ■

Gregg Kilday covers the movie industry for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*.

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Behind the Fallaci Image

by Lucinda Franks

The limousine opens and Oriana Fallaci, 30 minutes behind schedule, shoots out of it like a bullet. Aiming her small steely body for a Boeing 747 that will take her on a speaking tour of America, she glances off a couple of out-of-order doors, grazes a pilot, and ricochets through the airport lobby. "Mia Madonna, Mia Madonna! This is just like Italy! The doors don't work, they can't get me to the plane on time. They ruin my life. The luggage! Where's my scarf? The world is so stupid!"

The woman carries two suitcases that are nearly as heavy as she is, wears a gray pantsuit that might fit a large doll, and stacked shoes to make her five-feet-one-inches look taller; on her head is a little camel hat, and inside it, a body of work that has made trouble around the globe. At the age of 50, Oriana Fallaci is probably the best-known political interviewer on the international scene. She has repeatedly coaxed world leaders into conversations that become news items themselves: Pakastani Prime Minister Ali Bhutto's anti-Indian sentiments delayed an India-Pakistan peace treaty; a Portuguese politician's verbal indiscretions to Fallaci lost him an election; Henry Kissinger's description of his Lone Ranger style as a diplomat provoked journalistic comment and criticism for months; and in her interview with Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese premier conceded personally and publicly for the first time that Mao had not been infallible.

The press has become enamored of Fallaci's success and has generally glorified her journalistic ability. Yet no one seems more infatuated with Fallaci's success than the woman herself. A book of her collected articles is called *Interview With History*. Not Interviews With Important People, but in effect: Oriana and History.

Now she has given the world a new book, a novel, *A Man*, about her three-year love affair with the late Greek resistance fighter Alexander Panagoulis. The book was secretly printed in Italy (it damns Italian as well as Greek leaders), has already sold more than a million copies in Italy alone, is expected to find similar popularity in the U.S., and is a major professional departure: Fallaci is no longer merely an observer. In *A Man*, she portrays herself as the woman behind the Hero: both reporter and freedom fighter, narrator and protagonist, Homer and Odysseus in one. Stylistically, the novel is not unlike riding the high seas in the middle of a hurricane. We move through Panagoulis's attempted assassination of Papadapoulos, head of the Greek junta in 1968, through Panagoulis's years of torture and imprisonment, his release and martyrdom, and his final death in a questionable car accident. Fallaci's raft on this journey is made of Wagnerian verbs, Alexandrian adjectives, and Herculean hyperbole. The total effect can give the reader a great deal of intellectual indigestion.

In person, Fallaci is a tempest of contradictions. A deep-sown radical and an anarchist in spirit, she is as critical of tyrants of the left as the right. But ask her what she likes or admires about America and she will say, in the same breath: Vietnam War protestors, Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan ("I have a feeling about him; my instincts are always right"), cowboy westerns, Gerald Ford, and Mormons.

She says she "abhors power" but admits a fascination for the men who wield it. She presents herself as a champion of the oppressed, the persecuted, the huddled masses; and yet she is scornful of "this river of fleece, these cowardly sheep who will follow anybody who leads them." She is contemptuous of "the bourgeosie" and the rich, but she herself behaves as imperiously as a princess on a sedan chair, insisting, in this day of hard-pressed and penurious publishers, that Simon & Schuster send her on tour first-class, with hotel suites, and even a "valet" from the publicity department to soothe and serve her. "I do throw money away!" she gleefully

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MICHAEL MELL

admits and wears minks and diamonds, and she has a suite reserved for her in Rome's Excelsior Hotel as well as homes in Tuscany and New York, both crammed with antiques.

The fact that it is not always easy to identify Fallaci's true bias has allowed her interview-targets to read a sympathetic viewpoint into her previous interviews, and they have welcomed her cautiously. She attacked General Giap of Hanoi, so Henry Kissinger agreed to see her. Then, since she had caused Kissinger trouble in the press, South Vietnamese President Thieu decided it would be safe to talk to her.

Her effectiveness is enhanced by her physical stature: Tiny, she looks far from intimidating. Then, too, she often uses flattery, particularly to those she thinks are vulnerable to it (to Kissinger: "Dr. Kissinger, how do you explain the incredible movie star status you enjoy?"). Then, she mixes in some highly personal questions (to the Shah: "Why are you so sad, Majesty?"), some unexpected challenges (to Khaddafi: "Colonel, if the masses love you so much, then why do you need so much protection?"), or downright insults (to Khomeini: "Are you a fanatic?"). She leads her victims on what seems to be a safari of irrelevant questions, then when they least expect it she springs a trap. It's the method, she explains with no false modesty, that Socrates used.

With *A Man*, however, Fallaci has abandoned journalism for novelistic reporting — though any suggestion that there are similarities between her novel and, say, Norman Mailer's *Executioner's Song* brings the swift response: "Norman Mailer! That vain little starlet!" She claims that a drunken Mailer once made a fist at her. "'You have the fists of a teenage virgin, Norman!' I told him. His hands are soft and buttery and small; my hands are more virile than his. He's as empty as a glass when the wine is gone. At least I had the balls to live with a story in spite of danger and threats."

When Fallaci takes off on a tale, she can be a Little Alice, widening her doleful eyes, tossing up the back of her skirt before she sits down. Then, just as quickly she becomes a crone, clawing

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Oriana in Italy with her mother, Tosca Fallaci, and Alexandros Panagoulis.

the air, eyes narrowing, pale, a performance Sarah Bernhardt would have envied. Behind her tough histrionic exterior, however—which some of her friends call a front—there crouches a woman who is as easily bruised as a gardenia, who grows tearful when she talks of the miseries of her childhood in fascist Italy, of the death of her mother from cancer, and most particularly of her dead lover, "Alekos" Panagoulis.

The affair began when Panagoulis, who had been sentenced to death for his assassination attempt and then pardoned, was finally released in a general amnesty during the spring of 1973. As Fallaci tells the story, what helped keep him alive during the years of torture (beatings, suffocation, electric wires up his urethra) and isolation in a special cell only two yards by three was, when he could get hold of them, Fallaci's articles and books. To her—the star journalist for the Italian magazine *L'Europeo*, who was flitting from the war in Hanoi to the Olympic Games riots in Mexico during Panagoulis's imprisonment—he was a paragraph or two in the back of the newspaper. But when she read of his release, "something eerie happened. I went directly to Athens. I was pulled, sucked up, and I had this feeling of impending disaster, like you have when you board a plane and think: This is the one that is going to go down."

The meeting was, as Panagoulis's friend put it, "a mating of souls." The two fell in love in a passionate embrace of destinies that Fallaci reinvokes with the thunder of *Tristan und Isolde*. "I had been hiding under a blanket of political fatigue," she recalls. "I was disgusted with mankind...and then this vase of flowers called Panagoulis comes along and hits me over the head."

For the next three years, according to Fallaci, she drastically abridged her professional life, cancelling interviews with leaders (John Connally, for instance) and refusing an offer from the Italian Socialist party to run for Italy's congress, so that she could play Sancho Panza to Panagoulis's Don Quixote.

Fallaci describes Panagoulis as a reckless, unpredictable revolutionary who was not afraid to confront those (presumably government agents) who were constantly tailing him. (Fallaci describes an incident where he cornered and circled a trio of armed spies: Chewing his pipe, he fixed his black eyes on them until they fell to their knees and begged for mercy.) Panagoulis plotted such revolutionary enterprises as blowing up the Parthenon to attract attention "for freedom, for an end to tyranny." Once, Fallaci writes, she had to hold onto him to keep him from attacking the passing limousine of Papadapoulos a second time.

"Oh, he was full of pure madness!" she says, fingering the ring he gave her, running her red polished nails along the cigarette lighter that belonged to him. "I tried to calm him down, to keep an eye on him, but he was continually escaping from my hands. He was the kind of person who when he saw the dragon, he wanted to kill the dragon.

"Alekos was like me; he belonged to no party, he could not fit into any package." Panagoulis's individualism, however, finally alienated the little band of his friends and followers. Even when he went into exile in Europe, where Fallaci insisted they live in a lavish style that made him uncomfortable, he could interest no one in helping him to try bringing down the Greek junta.

"He was completely alone. I was the only thing he had. I don't think he ever got over the fact that when he went back to Athens on the anniversary of his assassination attempt, expecting to be greeted as a hero returning to his village, there was no one to cheer him."

But Fallaci nourished him. The two hid out much of the time "in the house in

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the woods that every hero must have," and it was there that she conceived and lost his baby, there that she would waken or return from shopping to find him gone on some mysterious mission with dynamite. He drank a lot, sometimes was violent, and, according to Fallaci, courted disaster like a prince courts a beautiful lady.

Fallaci admits that, although she used real names and facts in her novel, she altered tiny details, added others, left out incidents "so that this would be a story truer than the truth."

The incidents she left out were the ones that might have made Panagoulis less heroic but more human. Even as a member of Parliament for instance, he once defiantly pelted the police with eggs and apples and tore the stripes off a captain's uniform. "In my portrait of him, he should not be unpopular because he did foolish things, but only for ideological reasons," says Fallaci. "But no, I did not exaggerate his life. He was an exaggerated man, a Christ figure, someone unique who translated his beliefs into actions! I have had long love affairs but this man wiped out all of them. If someone touches me now, I recoil.

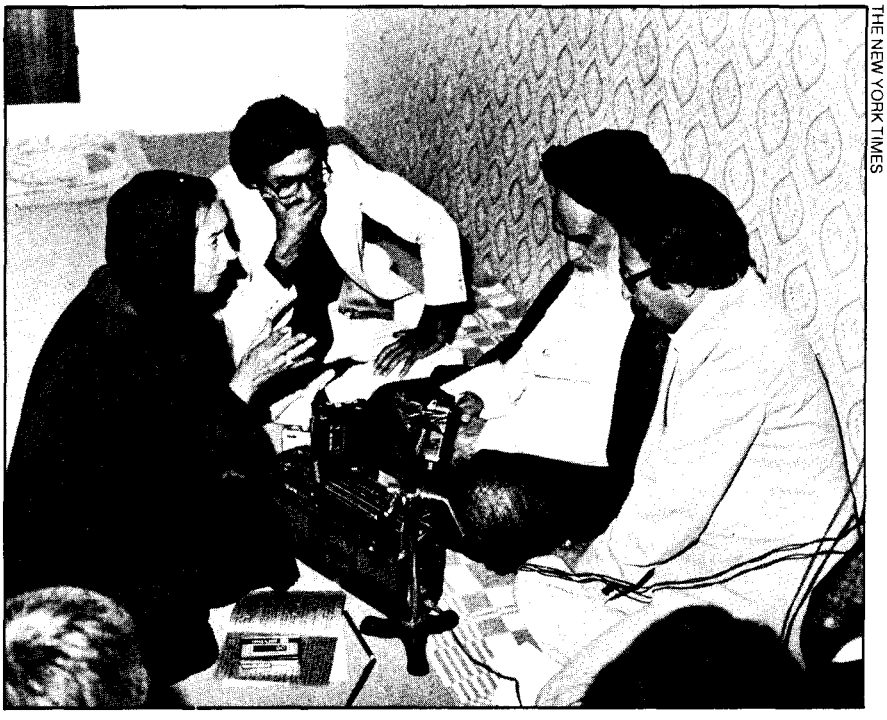
"I'm convinced they would have assassinated him immediately had I not been at his side. I was a star in Greece—there were headlines all over the place: 'Fallaci Interviews Brandt!' 'Fallaci Interviews Panagoulis!' The reporters wanted to interview *me*, not him! I was always with him so the government assassins would never dare touch him. He was blessed the day I came to him. He made a wise choice in choosing me to love."

Clearly, there was a streak of mutual use in their tryst. Perhaps Fallaci, long having had to sublimate her considerable political passions into voyeurism, the back-bench stargazing that is the lot of a journalist, had gone in quest of a greater mission when she met Panagoulis. Perhaps she fell in love more with heroism than with a hero.

"Maybe I did," she sighs. "I could never be in love with a coward. I know I was never in love with his body—I always told him he was so ugly!—but I loved what he represented."

Still, Fallaci was not always a perfect Panza. In fact, she sometimes seemed to be a Lady Macbeth. Though she claims she restrained him in some of his wilder fevers, Fallaci also admits she tried to discourage him from joining the political establishment that courted him after his release from prison. "He was a solitary hero," she says. "I did not want him to compromise." She admits that she could not stand to witness his defeats: When he was losing the election to the Greek Parliament, for instance, she left for Amman to interview King Hussein three days earlier than she had planned.

If Fallaci claims in the past to have made some cavalry charges into the worlds of her subjects (like helping a Bolivian revolutionary escape from prison), and perhaps the impact of her interviews with heads of state has given her the idea that oceans might possibly part for her. Having discovered that mere mortal men lurk behind the most heroic of exteriors, she went about creating a hero from... well,



THE NEW YORK TIMES

Fallaci with Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini and President Banisadr, September 1979.

And she seems proud of what she calls his "fate to die and therefore live longer as a hero than he would have had he remained alive."

Fallaci makes a convincing case that the car accident which killed Panagoulis on May 5, 1976, was an assassination. The two had repeatedly been bumped and nearly forced off cliffs by strange cars in the past, she says, and although the junta had been overthrown, Panagoulis had unearthed documents from Greece's interrogation and torture center that indicted present government ministers.

Many of Panagoulis's friends and family, however, strongly disagree. "They feel that Fallaci, in her emotional attachment, has exaggerated the worth of the documents," says a friend of Panagoulis's brother, now a member of Parliament. "She has romanticized what was really just a case of Alexandros's bad driving."

just a mortal man. Sometimes it is unclear where Panagoulis the hero ends and Fallaci the heroine begins. In order to write the book, she says, she holed herself up for three years in a tiny corridor of her 30-room Tuscan farmhouse which "exactly resembled the cell where Panagoulis was imprisoned. It was torment."

If adults are constantly trying to relive, to make restitution for their childhoods, it is not hard to find the roots of Fallaci's antagonism toward those in power, her own fierce sense of justice. Like Panagoulis, her father, a Florence cabinetmaker who became a military commander in the underground resisting Mussolini, was captured, tortured, blindfolded, and told that he would be shot. Then, his captors fired over his head.

"You Americans don't know what it is to suffer. You don't know torture, you don't know real poverty," she says,

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Fallaci interviewing (top) India's Prime Minister Indira Ghandi in the early Seventies and (bottom) Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk in the late Sixties.

admitting that, no, she has never heard of places called the South Bronx, Watts, or Appalachia.

"During the war, we ate nothing but squash for two months. My sister and I risked death to run to a bombed dump train between two waves of bomber planes so we could steal a big jar of apricot jam. It had been roasted by the burning and no jam was ever so tasty.

"We were poor. Even my first day at university was ruined. You had to give the upperclassmen money or gifts and if you didn't, they formed a corridor and you had to go through it, and they hit you, all of them at once. I didn't have any money so I ran home and my mother took all the house money and bought some cigarettes: They were the cheapest brand. The kids threw them on the ground and they made the corridor anyway. Fascism had ended and democracy had come to Italy and look what happened to me anyway! It brings a lump to my throat just telling it."

She worked as a journalist to pay for her schooling and, after reporting from Vietnam, moved from interviewing show-business personalities to confronting heads of state.

Today, fan letters, many of them saying how much Fallaci is to be envied, come to her in droves. "I think they are very stupid. I am an unhappy person. I've had too hard a life. I think of when my mother was dying and she said she would not do her life over again, things had been so tough. Thank goodness I was able to give my parents what they never had. A washing machine. A big home.

"No, I don't really like myself that much. I always wanted to be like Katharine Hepburn, tall, dramatic. When I catch sight of my reflection in a store window I think, 'Yuk! What a stubby little thing.'"

But if she judges herself too short in height, intellectually Fallaci judges herself far taller than the rest of us. These days, Fallaci spends about half her time in this country, and she is vocal about its defects. "I followed the dirt that was the U.S. election campaign on television. It made me think how universal Alekos's story is. The ignorance and indifference of the crowds, the electorate!" An hour later, however, Fallaci is saying she understands exactly why the American people voted Reagan in. "They have a good life and they don't want to lose it. I don't despise ignorant people. I've lived with them all my life. I'm very democratic, I accept the decisions of democracy, I accept Reagan."

It is speaking at universities that she finds most depressing about America. "They are filled with stupidity. You Americans go to the moon but you don't know the meaning of words like Marxism. You have all this technology but you have no culture, no history. You look at things in terms of black and white, you are so naive.

"I love America but you don't bother to think anymore, you just want entertainment. I feel like Cassandra when she said 'Troy is burning' and they said 'Oh, there she goes again!' But Troy *is* burning and you better hurry because when *you* fall, Western civilization also falls."

Oriana Fallaci remains one of the greatest political interviewers of all time, someone who lays back the lies we mistook for the truth. But those who do battle with the Goliaths of the world rarely come through with their humility intact. In extracting the vanity from the kings she has interviewed, Fallaci may have become infected herself. ■

Lucinda Franks is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author who is currently working on a novel.

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Sarah Caldwell's Daring Risk

by Richard Thorne

Give Richmond Crinkley points for daring. Assigned to produce a theatrical season for the Vivian Beaumont Theater at New York's Lincoln Center—a house that superstitious theater professionals consider jinxed—he started off modestly enough, unveiling last November a revival of *The Philadelphia Story* directed by Ellis Rabb. The play was not a startling offering nor was Rabb an unlikely steward, though (jinxed?) the production received decidedly mixed notices. Crinkley proved his daring, however, with his second offering. Almost as if to compensate for the inherent lack of drama in the first, he picked Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, come January 22, to be directed by one of Western civilization's most improbable candidates, Sarah Caldwell.

Long known as the miracle worker of Boston, Sarah Caldwell has made her reputation entirely in opera. She has never directed a straight play before. But as the driving force behind all the Opera Company of Boston's productions, Caldwell's claim to national fame has come more from her innate sense of theatricality as a director than from her accomplished conducting. For better or for worse, no matter what the opera, at some point the Caldwell magic is nearly always brought to the fore and the audience knows that here "it" comes. Her "its" have become legendary: Don Quichotte literally battled a windmill, and the sight of him going into the flies, heightened by Massenet's impetuous music, caused the audience to gasp, the sound of which Caldwell still cherishes.

In *The Trojans*, when the Greeks brought the Trojan horse into Troy, the director had a field day playing with scale and perspective. The enormous animal towered above the proscenium on a thrust stage and, when it opened, children climbed out. On the ramparts of the wall surrounding the city, others were dressed as soldiers. "The thing I was proudest of," Caldwell beams, "was that no one in the audience had any sense that they were children because the perspective worked."

Buffs of this kind of visceral showmanship, however, may be disappointed to learn that before she went into rehearsal, Caldwell was deciding *Macbeth* didn't need any directorial and scenic conceits—any extras that might detract from Shakespeare's drama. "The more I study the text, the more I realize that it is in its words, thoughts, feelings, and expression of the performers that this particular play lives," Caldwell observes. "There are plays that can be helped enormously by embellishments of pantomime, color, spectacle. In *Macbeth* there are elements of spectacle—hallucinations, atmospheric things—but one has to do them sharply and swiftly and in a manner that doesn't get in the way of everything else." Such self-effacing sentiments come as something of a shock, especially from the Barnum of Opera, as Caldwell has often been called, a director famous for her conviction that art and spectacle are far from antithetical.

Her popularity stems from her track record, the notorious way she runs her opera company, and her manifold eccentricities.

So there we have it. Lincoln Center's *Macbeth* is in effect a triple gamble: Crinkley's in hiring Caldwell in the first place; Caldwell's in attempting the opera-to-theater leap in the second place; and finally her plans to attempt directing in a restrained manner seemingly alien to her.

At 56, Sarah Caldwell is something of a human Cuisinart. Aggressively seeking out far-fetched, often disparate elements, she has, through the force of an omnivorous sensibility, been able to coerce them into a unified whole. Twenty-three years ago against awesome odds she founded the Opera Company of Boston. It was only three seasons ago that she finally got her own theater. Before that, she put on opera where she could: in a college gymnasium, in a flower market, in a musty vaudeville house. But by consistently pulling together the liveliest talents and imaginations she could attract, Caldwell has been able to stage a revolution against the tired tradition that opera, by definition, is not theater.

The more ingredients Sarah Caldwell has to blend the happier she is: In Boston the program lists her as director and conductor, but Sarah-watchers know that as such she is a demanding, often shrieking overseer of the chorus, the set and costume designers, the stagehands, the lighting and technical crews. And it's not merely that she's overbearing and sometimes a bully; she craves her collaborators' ideas—she's been called the greatest brain-picker alive—but will only accept them at their best and most daring.

The artists who work for her often find her demands as liberating as they

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NANCY RICA SCHIFF

are challenging. Stage designer Herbert Senn, who together with Helen Pond has helped create some of Caldwell's most atmospheric and successful productions (they've designed *Macbeth* as well), says, "Most directors working with designers make the collaboration feel like a contest—they're afraid we'll steal the show. That's never the case with Sarah. In an age of faceless designers, she lets us have a face. And in the end, if you believe some of the critics, it looks like she's designed the scenery too!"

Caldwell calls on her collaborators to help her exhume forgotten works, wrestle with new ones, untangle the Gordian knots of the repertory and present these varied, offbeat operas in a manner that is mesmerizing and, whether one accepts the overall concept or not, never dull. Works such as *Moses and Aron*, *The Trojans*, *The Ice Break*, *Russlan and Ludmilla*, *War and Peace*, *Montezuma*, and *Don Quichotte* have become the director's calling card, but she has also had great success with bread-and-butter operas like *La Bohème* and *Aida*.

Her formidable controversial reputation has been painstakingly concocted over the past two decades from a heady combination of clever public relations and hard work. She is surely the most visible opera director in this country—even rising recently into the distinguished ranks of ex-senators and sports figures who have asked, "Do you know me?" for American Express. Her popularity stems from her professional track record, the notorious sui generis fashion in which she runs her company and prepares an opera for public consumption, and her personal eccentricities, which are legion.

There is a widespread body of lore known, only sometimes affectionately, as "Sarah stories." These oft-repeated tidbits, no matter how humorous or how cruel, intertwine her personal and professional existences, stressing the undeniable fact that her life is her work. She frequently labors around the clock, oblivious to the fact that she may not always be in the most benevolent humor. Meanwhile, she is usually eating junk food that is a good deal more fattening than nourishing, and she never seems to have realized that a filthy theater is not the most restful place in which to get a good night's sleep.

In the kind of frenzied and chaotic whirlwind life she assigns herself, Caldwell prefers casting her operas at the eleventh hour and then rehearsing them nonstop until opening night. Insiders never judge a Caldwell opening as more than a final dress rehearsal. And yet, despite these seemingly undisciplined practices, any number of splendid singers and designers return repeatedly for more of the same.

All the Caldwell regulars are resigned to the fact that there's no changing her in any case. She has been functioning this way since she left Arkansas, where she spent her childhood (she was born in Missouri), to study at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music. She staged her first opera at Tanglewood before she was 20, and later left her post on the music faculty of Boston University to create her own opera company. As Richmond Crinkley, well aware of Caldwell's forbidding reputation,diplomatically says, "Everybody who is any good has an unusual mode of operation. A producer must know how to ride these ups and downs."

Crinkley, who has known Caldwell since 1975 when they first found solace in one another's company at a dull conference, has wisely assigned Caldwell a Shakespearean as opposed to a contemporary play. "I have no doubts about the switch for Sarah, which I would actually call a transition," Herbert Senn says. "Shakespeare is some-

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Caldwell, left center, at work on designs for *Macbeth*, with (left to right) designers Carrie Robbins (costumes), Herbert Senn and Helen Pond (sets).

where between opera and theater. Ultimately it's spoken opera, so it will be an easy transition."

Perhaps not as easy as Senn predicts. When she was casting *Macbeth* in October, Caldwell notes, she suddenly found herself behaving peculiarly—listening far more than she was looking. "I became increasingly conscious of the vocal sounds of the performers and the need for a variety of them—tenors, basses—in the company," she says, flashing one of the disarming grins known to soften the hearts and loosen the purse strings of the most formidable of Brahmins. "I tried somehow to squelch those feelings, but they unsquelchably kept coming back. Maybe it was a subconscious wish that the actors were really singers."

As she delves deeper into the differences between theater and opera, Caldwell says, she feels like "someone in a slightly foreign land noticing the exotica as I find it. Actually, the differences are becoming quite clear to me. What one does not have in the spoken *Macbeth* is a built-in inflection. That means any single phrase can have a variety of meanings, depending upon the way it is inflected. Silence becomes a very important tool, as does the amount of time it takes to do a certain action.

"In opera, since inflections and timings have been pre-decided for you by the composer, a great deal of the emotional undercurrent has also been decided. I am used to working from the point of view of creating movement, visual images, a sequence of impressions which the music will function with. A lot of that is like making a good soup: You put in a little salt, taste it, put in a little more. It's an empirical thing; you recognize the dosage when you hit it. If you have added too much of one ingredient, you recognize that too because it suddenly becomes ludicrous.

"These are the thought processes I am familiar with in directing opera. Many of these helpful ingredients are no longer mine, but I feel confident that the process is not so dissimilar. One recognizes the result—it either will or will not work.

The director has staged Verdi's setting of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* twice and recognizes that the words and ideas in the play offer far more opportunities to explore the many complexities that motivate the characters. And even before an actor had set foot on stage to rehearse, a Caldwellian touch could be discerned in the casting. Philip Anglim, who became something of an overnight sensation for his portrayal of the title character in *The Elephant Man*, will be Macbeth. He is 27. His lady will be portrayed by Maureen Anderman, last seen on Broadway in a revival of *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. She is 34. Anglim and Anderman are unusually young for their roles.

"I think their youth makes it an infinitely more interesting play," Caldwell observes. "It is a deeper tragedy if someone young is destroyed by ambition in such a needless way.

The degree to which she can coax performances of style and stature out of Anglim and Anderman will, inevitably, make or break Caldwell's theater debut—especially if she holds her famous instinct for the spectacular in check. Predictably, perhaps, Caldwell downplays this instinct. "I can say that we have never, ever tried to do something just to be different," she insists. "All the ideas, well-inspired or poorly inspired, have come from studying the piece we are doing and have grown out of that.

"If they are employed subtly and successfully, the art of the scenic designer, costume designer, and director will disappear. Whether in opera or theater, the process is like a mosaic. You have to put little details in place. Then, hopefully, there's a fusion of these elements. I feel if I've done a good job with *Macbeth*, when the audience leaves the theater, they'll still be absorbed in the play and the players."

Caldwell may indeed do a good job. But it's worth noting that while numerous theatrical directors have proven adept, even inspired, when they tried staging opera, few if any opera directors have made the reverse transition to nonmusical theater. Which clearly lengthens the artistic odds riding on the triple gamble in this month's *Macbeth*. Still, there's no likelier gambler to take on the challenge than the redoubtable Sarah Caldwell. ■

Richard Thorne has written about cultural issues for a number of national publications.

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Gerald Cantor's Rodins

by Vicki Goldberg

In 1974, B. Gerald Cantor gave away about $5 million worth of Rodins, an astonishing gesture seldom matched even by bequests. He gave 10 pieces to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, 39 to the Los Angeles County Museum, of which he is a trustee, and 87 to the Stanford University Museum of Art. Over the years, he estimates he has given away several hundred works of art. The L.A. museum has built the B. G. Cantor Sculpture Garden and also has a gallery full of Rodins that once belonged to Cantor. He's given Stanford "about 150 objects in all," and he's still at it.

Despite this lavish flow of bronze from his hands to museums, Mr. Cantor still owns what is probably the most important Rodin collection in private hands. "I'm always buying," he says. "If that stops, I'm in trouble." To accommodate their sculptures, Bernie and Iris Cantor rebuilt their New York apartment, designed their California apartment for art, and redesigned his California office. Rodin's over-life-size "Adam" makes the troubled passage into life in the hall of their New York duplex, opposite a small version of "The Kiss." "The Thinker" broods in the living room; "The Naked Balzac" and "Eve" preside over dinner. Mr. Cantor looks up from his library desk, past a TV screen that reports the international financial news, at shelves lined with the small, expressive hands Rodin fashioned for himself. In the bedroom, three passionately embracing Rodin couples, one on a platform that rises mechanically to reveal the television set, are displayed opposite a canopied bed. (The housemaid was once heard to mutter, "Don't they ever finish?") Even in the bathroom, a mirrored wall above the tub is filled with small bronzes.

In the New York office of Cantor, Fitzgerald Group, Ltd., a financial holding company, the "Monument to Balzac" rears its massive bulk in the reception room, and smaller Rodins sit on the windowsills, the floor, the desk in the office of B. G. Cantor, chairman of the board. It is his business acumen that has enabled Cantor to afford his passion. A native of the Bronx, New York, Cantor as a young teenager sold hot dogs in Yankee Stadium, but only at double headers, when he could make more money. At New York University in the mid-Thirties, with jobs scarce, he decided on law as a career. One day, seeing a friend of his who had recently won his law degree working in the street with a pickaxe, Bernie Cantor changed his mind about law, landed a job as a junior analyst on Wall Street, and attended school at night. When, at the beginning of a new semester, he discovered that his teacher would be a man in the firm he worked for, he quit school. "I thought I knew more than he did," Mr. Cantor says, "and I was right." After World War II, he set up his own firm; today Cantor, Fitzgerald has offices in New York, Beverly Hills, Chicago, and Dallas.

Mr. Cantor's giving spree began in 1974 when he was writing his will. Today, Mr. Cantor consults a computer printout to determine which artworks he has where. While the printout contains the names of many major artists from the Belle Epoque to the present, Cantor's abiding passion as a collector has been Rodin.

Rodin has always been justly considered one of the great sculptors of all time, although for a while he fell out of favor with formalist critics who thought his work too sentimental, too 19th century for our era. Until the mid-Fifties, the Museum of Modern Art did not own a Rodin, and the Metropolitan Museum showed only his marble sculptures, keeping his bronzes in the basement. Yet the marbles were made by skilled professional carvers from Rodin's models, the sculptor himself merely supervising and approving the results. Rodin's true media were the clay and plaster he modeled. His output was enormous—he made 22 studies for Balzac's head, seven for the nude body, 16 for the clothed statue. His devotion to the nude body and, in his early works, to symbolism links Rodin to the 19th century, but his determination to celebrate what he called "that poignant struggle which is the basis of our existence and which brings to grips body and soul" speaks directly to an age of anxiety.

Bernie Cantor encountered his first Rodin, "The Hand of God," in the mid-Forties at the Metropolitan Museum. In an instant, he was converted, smitten by this artist whose work struck him as "strong, sensuous, and different." Several months later he chanced upon a small version of the same sculpture in a shop and bought it for less than $200, at a time when Rodin wasn't in vogue. That "Hand" whetted an appetite that his income wasn't yet ready to satisfy.

When he was starting to collect, he would stay in Paris for days after a business trip, haunting the Musée Rodin. Cecile Goldscheider, then the curator, became in effect his adviser, as

Mr. and Mrs. Cantor in their New York apartment living room with Rodin's "The Thinker" and "Dance Studies."

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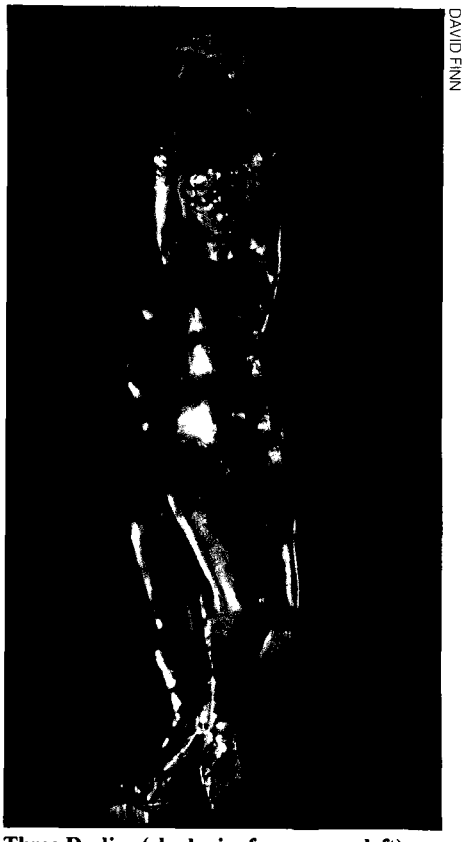
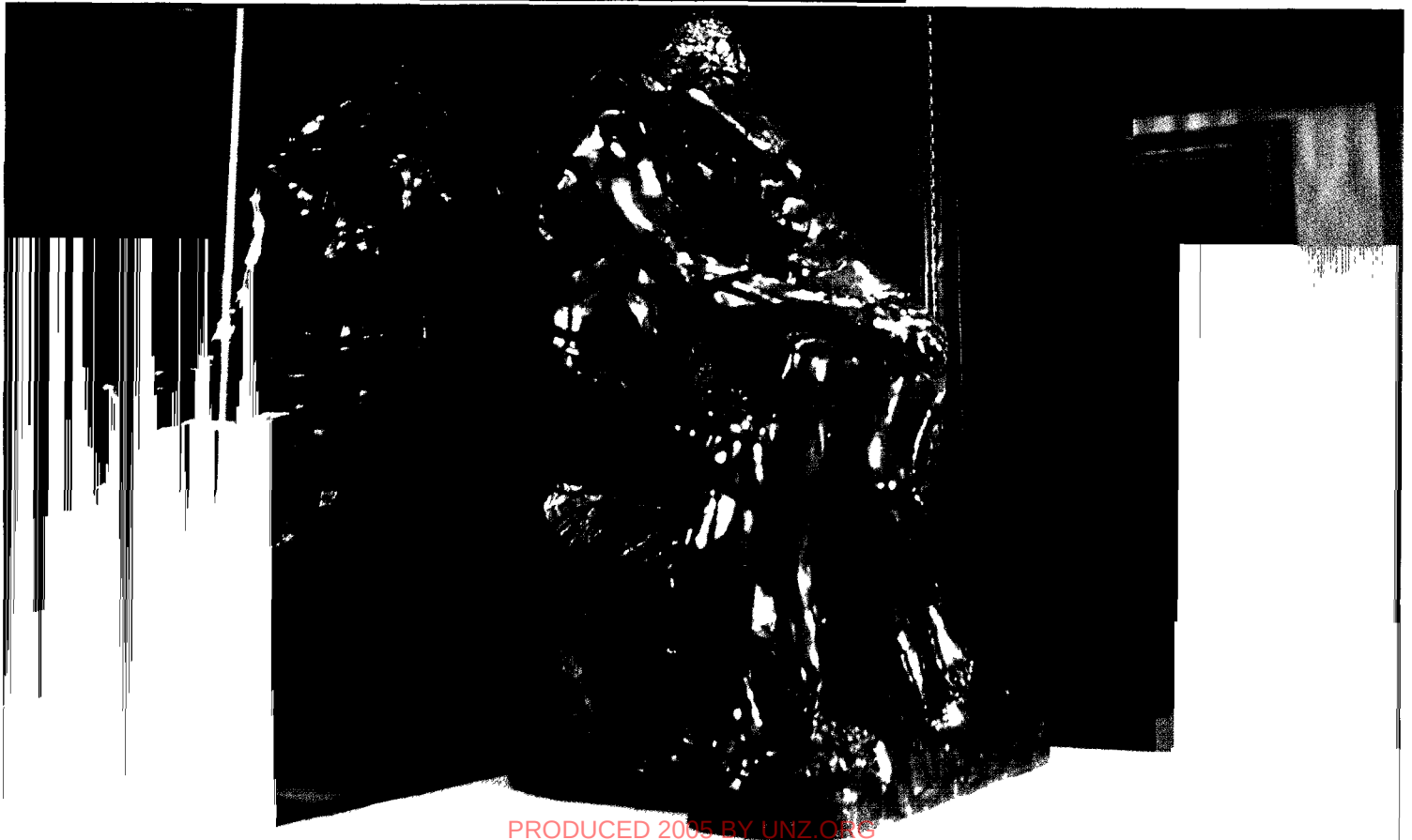


DAVID FINN

Three Rodins (clockwise from upper left): The magnificent life-scale "Adam" in the Cantors' foyer; the graceful "Venus" and her reflection in the living room mirror; and the fervent "The Kiss," the most famous of Rodin's amorous sculptures, whose explicitness once shocked the Paris art world, in the mirrored hallway to the dining room.



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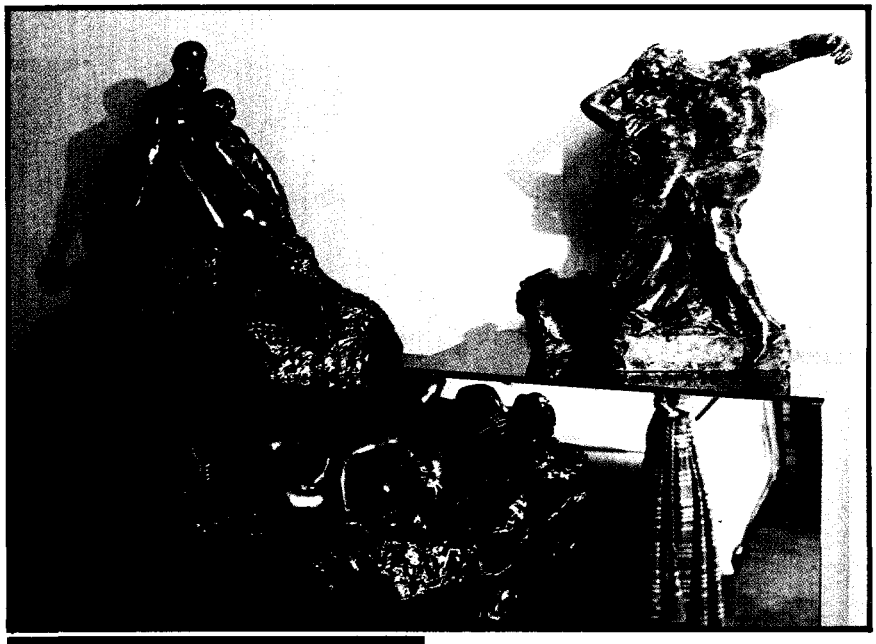
did her successor, Monique Laurent. One of Mr. Cantor's chief interests is seeing how the sculptor got to where he was going, and in the late Sixties he recommended that the museum cast the Balzac studies, almost none of which had been cast in Rodin's lifetime. Rodin's will stipulated that no more than 12 casts could ever be made of any of his works; the museum had been supervising casts of selected pieces since Rodin's death in 1917. The "Balzac" itself was not cast until the Thirties. As Mr. Cantor tells it, some of those at the dedication who had originally refused to accept Rodin's model, now cried because the sculptor hadn't lived to see it.

Bernie Cantor is so devoted to three-dimensional objects that he would have sculpture on the walls too, if he could. "I jump up and down a lot," says Iris Cantor, who is eager to bring the painting collection up to the level of the sculpture. The collection today includes a number of neo-Impressionist paintings, two Vlamincks, some quite early works by Kandinsky, Larionov, and Robert Delaunay, and several, like a Boldini and a Lucien Simon, from Mr. Cantor's favorite period, the Belle Epoque. Earlier in his collecting career, he tried on the moderns for size—he has given away works by Picasso, Beckmann, Nolde, and Kirchner, to name just a few—but found they did not fit. "We've tried," he says, "but the effort was unsuccessful. We have not been able to live with contemporary art."

As he looks toward the future, Bernie Cantor is, as usual, thinking big. He has commissioned the Museé Rodin to cast "The Gates of Hell," a mere nine tons of Rodin. When it reaches the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., for the Rodin show in July, a ceiling will have to be opened to drop it in. After the show's tour, no one is certain what to do with a monument so great in every sense. "The Gates," never cast in Rodin's lifetime, has only been cast five times since. Mr. Cantor says he thought for a while there was a curse on them. Four of those five collectors (including Goering) died before seeing a cast; happily, the fifth man was still hale on its arrival.

From his present office, Bernie Cantor looks out past studies of Balzac to Central Park. "That would make a nice sculpture garden," he says wickedly, looking over the trees. "But you'd need too much sculpture." Still, if someone were to write that New York needed a sculpture garden. . . . ■



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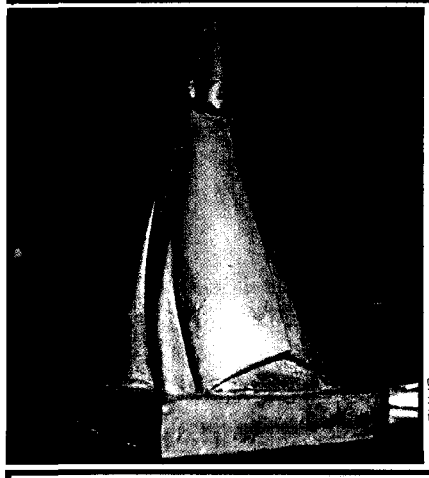

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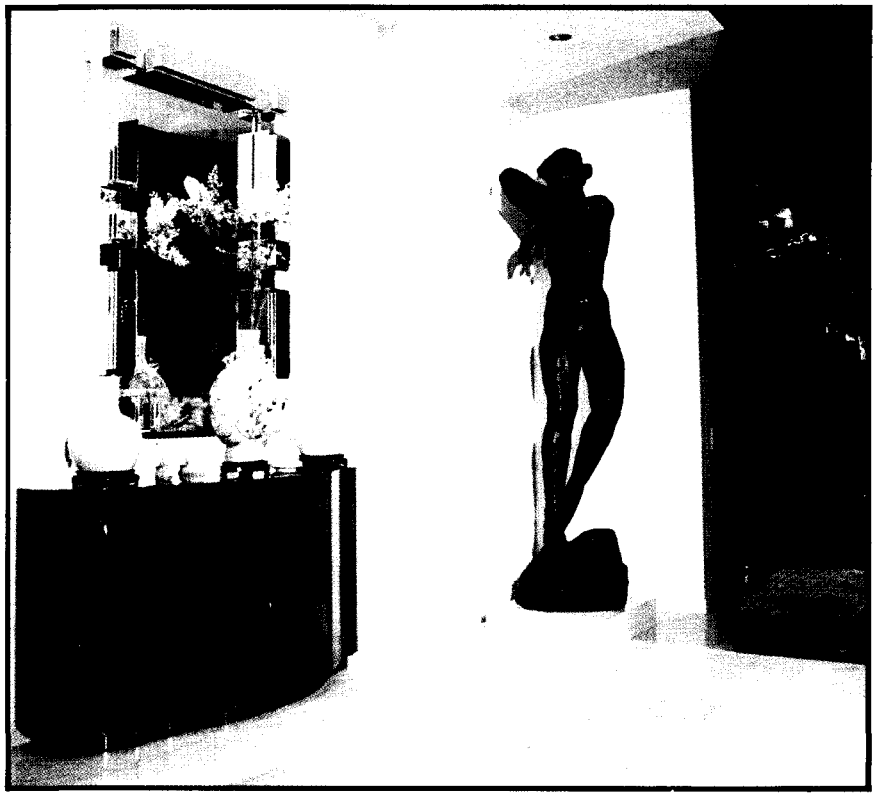

DAVID FINN

A cleaning woman, seeing these three pairs of Rodin lovers embracing in the Cantors' bedroom, asked: "Will they never finish?" The couples are, from lowest to highest pedestal, "Amour and Psyche," "Eternal Idol," and "Eternal Spring." Among the other sculptors represented in the Cantors' collection are Giacomo Manzu with "The Cardinal" (left), and Georg Kolbe (below), whose delicate "The Night" dances in a corner of the sculpture-filled living room.

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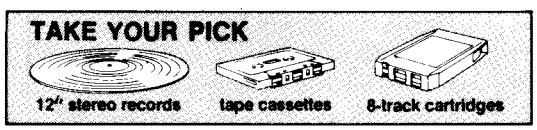

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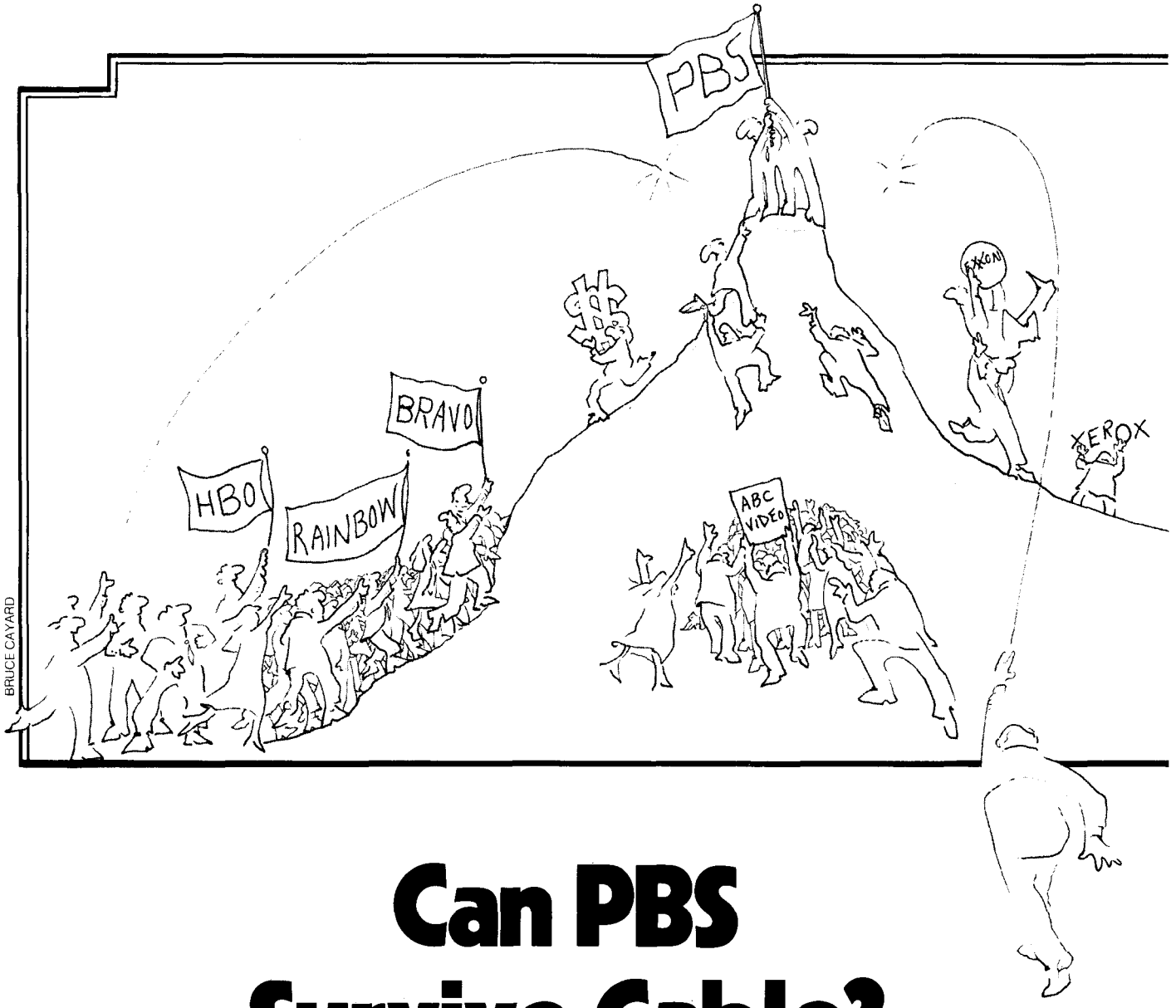

Can PBS Survive Cable?

by Peter Caranicas

Is public broadcasting nearly dead? The casual PBS viewer, who has seen the quality and variety of public TV programs improve over the years, may be stunned to learn that right now this is an urgent question. In the corridors of local public stations everywhere and in the system's seats of power in Washington, there's talk of a rapidly approaching doomsday for public television. The suddenly looming menace: cable TV.

Unlike earlier challenges to public television's existence, cable's threat cannot be fought by political means. In the past, public broadcasting weathered political slings and arrows flung at it during the Nixon years, survived the internecine rivalry between its two governing bodies—the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)—and outlived opposition from commercial broadcasters. It has nearly achieved its goal of building a nationwide empire of more than 200 operating stations linked by the industry's most advanced satellite hookup. And with a resurgence of interest in the arts and culture, public broadcasting now draws more viewers than ever before. On the surface, its future looks secure.

But in reality, cable TV has begun to mount a fearsome challenge by spawning culturally oriented "programming services" that could undermine everything public broadcasting has built. These new services may sap public TV's audience by televising similar programs. They could draw away money by capturing as sponsors the same corporations that now underwrite shows appearing on public TV. And they will compete in the same marketplace for programming and for talent. Today, cable reaches only one-quarter of all U.S. TV-owning homes—but as many as half of all households will be

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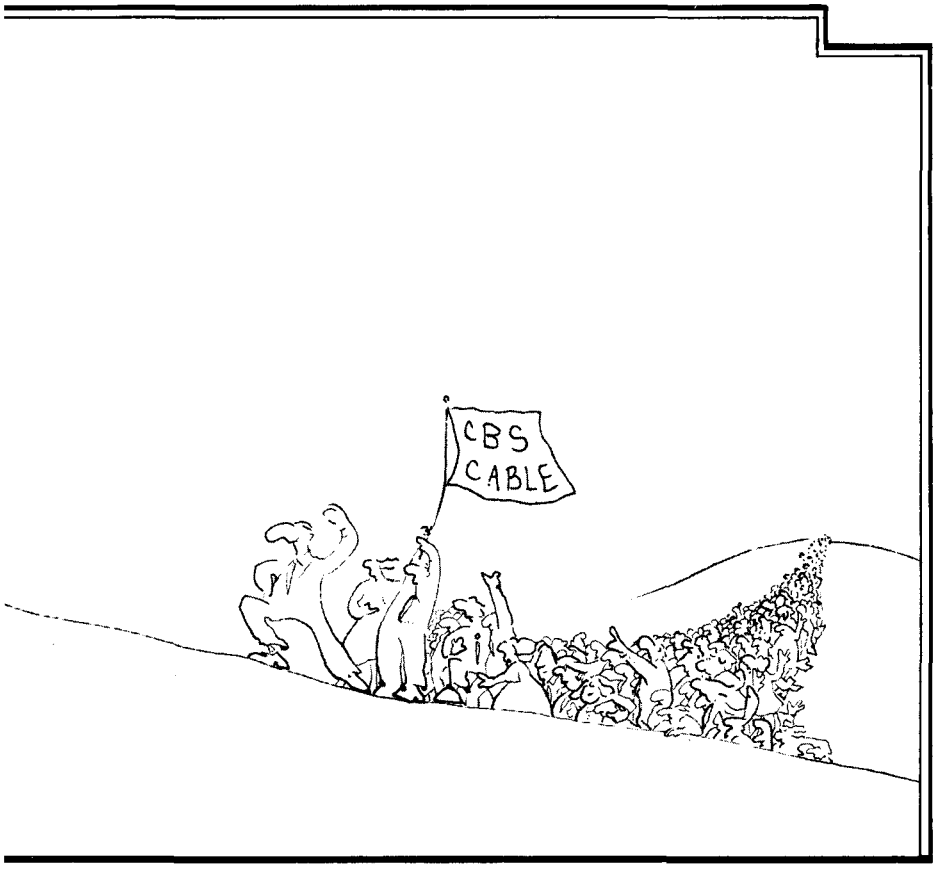

cable subscribers by the end of the decade, and practically 100 percent could be wired by the year 2000.

This new cable-vs.-PBS competition contains a supreme irony. Until now, cable TV has been one of public broadcasting's greatest allies, enabling it to enter the homes of viewers it could never have reached over the air. Since public TV stations were established later than commercial counterparts, many were relegated to the hard-to-receive UHF band (Channel 14 and over). In addition, many smaller cities and towns were out of the nearest public station's reach. Cable TV, with its large channel capacity and its ability to pull in dim and distant signals, helped public TV overcome its reception problems wherever wires were laid.

But that very channel capacity (newly built cable systems have 54 or more channels), combined with the ability to establish an instant cable network via satellite, has spurred the creation of nationwide cable programming networks. Some, like Home Box Office, offering recent, unedited movies without commercials, are pay-TV services, and require subscribers to pay an extra $5 to $10 per month over and above the basic cable fee. Others, like entrepreneur Ted Turner's all-news Cable News Network, or the all-sports ESPN network, are advertiser-supported and are usually supplied at no extra charge to cable subscribers.

With the number of subscribers constantly growing, it was only a matter of time before someone launched a PBS-type cable channel—either pay or sponsored. The first assault, bearing the name Bravo Programming, came on December 8. On that day a TV signal carrying an 80th-birthday tribute to composer Aaron Copland, taped in Carnegie Hall with the composer and Leonard Bernstein conducting different segments, shot skyward from a facility near Belmont Racetrack on the outskirts of New York City. A satellite stationed 22,000 miles above the equator turned the signal around and blanketed it over the entire U.S., where it was picked up by local cable TV systems and offered for a fee on a special pay channel.

Bravo Programming, based in Woodbury, New York, now produces performing-arts programs for cable distribution every Sunday and Monday evening. Other recent Bravo shows include Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, and concerts by the Vienna Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall and the Aspen Chamber Orchestra at the Aspen Music Festival. These taped performances are combined with a magazine-format talk show on the arts presented by such hosts as Schuyler Chapin, former general manager of the Metropolitan Opera.

Bravo is part of a larger pay TV programming service that goes by the name Rainbow. Still in its infancy, the company is based in Denver, where president Jerry Maglio works to persuade established cable systems to offer subscribers his commercial-free cultural channel for a fee. Rainbow and the local operators split the revenue. Maglio insists the new service presents no threat to public television because it focuses exclusively on the performing arts while PBS features many other types of programs. He also points out that Bravo does not compete for corporate sponsorship money.

The same cannot be said for other cultural programming services now on the drawing boards. ABC Video, a division of ABC, plans to start an advertiser-supported cultural cable service sometime in 1981 and is buying cable rights to several performing-arts programs, according to its president, Herb Granath. A number of other large media companies—Hearst Publishing, Viacom Communications, Warner Amex—have the resources and the inclination to enter the same arena.

But by far the most significant player in this game, and the biggest threat to PBS to emerge thus far, is CBS Cable, owned by the giant broadcaster. Having read the writing on the wall, CBS chairman William Paley made a decision last year to stop opposing cable television and to start creating programs for the new medium. After careful study, CBS decided to launch a non-pay, commercially sponsored, culturally oriented cable service that would be on 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The present timetable calls for a start-up date sometime this fall.

A look at the programming now under development at CBS Cable reveals a lineup that's shockingly similar to what's seen on PBS. Among the shows that are likely to be produced or acquired: a dramatic recreation of Gertrude Stein's life, with Pat Carroll; Gerard Schwarz conducting the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; a jazz program with Dizzy Gillespie; Leonard Bernstein conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in all nine of Beethoven's symphonies; original shows by theater virtuoso Elizabeth Swados; and the films *Orchestra Rehearsal*, by Fellini,

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and *The Tree of Wooden Clogs*, by Ermanno Olmi. CBS Cable also plans to offer humor, dance, and cabaret-style programming.

PBS is worried. In the words of its president, Lawrence Grossman: "We're keeping an eye on what CBS is doing." In the stronger words of a staff producer at a public station who asked not to be identified: "PBS is terrified that CBS Cable will drain its audience."

In addition to fighting for the same audience, PBS and CBS Cable may well end up fighting for the same sponsors. The large blue-chip corporate underwriters of public TV programs—Mobil, Exxon, Xerox—have long been frustrated at not being able to have more than very brief mentions at the very beginnings and ends of the programs they help pay for. CBS Cable wants to give the same advertisers up to five minutes of message per hour, and give companies the opportunity to sponsor entire series of programs, reviving a practice of the medium's early days.

Most observers feel that cable will make some inroads into the corporate backing of public programs, but that funds will never dry up altogether. "Undoubtedly there will be some drop-off," predicts Tom Johnston, director of market development at New York's public station, WNET, "but companies will continue to underwrite public TV programs to maintain their philanthropic image." Herbert Schmertz, the man at Mobil most directly responsible for the petroleum giant's public-TV commitments, acknowledges that the CBS Cable people have "been around" to see him, but he says he did not offer them any encouragement.

While the loss of audience share and sponsors are future considerations, the draining away of talent by cable is a challenge public TV will have to confront much more quickly. "Everyone thinks there'll be a run on people," says a WNET staff producer who just turned down an offer from Bravo but acknowledges he's looking around. At the middle level of public-TV management and production, the word is out that cable is the place to look for the next job.

Cable is also wooing the talented independents on whom public broadcasting now depends so heavily. Jack Willis, the newly appointed vice president of programming at CBS Cable, is an award-winning WNET veteran who coproduced *The Great American Dream Machine* and brought New York City viewers a local nightly news magazine, *The 51st State*. Before joining CBS Cable Willis worked independently, but his contacts, and the producers he'll bring to CBS on a per-series basis, are likely to have connections with public television.

Still, while public television must unquestionably grapple with the spread of cultural programs to cable, it's far too early to sound PBS's death knell. Farsighted members of the public-TV community are responding to cable's advances in several ways. The first major indication of these moves came last May—one month before CBS Cable was announced and two months before Bravo—when the Carnegie Corporation published a book called *Keeping PACE With the New Television*, which became known as the *Pace Report* (for Performing Arts, Culture and Entertainment).

The aggressive cultural thrust of cable TV threatens to draw audiences, sponsors, programs, and talent away from PBS.

The 280-page study urges public broadcasting to create a national, nonprofit pay cable service based on performing arts and cultural programming. It received much attention but spurred no action, though it probably helped provoke a "grand alliance" speech from PBS president Grossman last September, in which he proposed "an unprecedented partnership" between public stations and all the nation's major cultural institutions to set up a nationwide pay-TV service.

More concrete action has been taken at the local station level—especially at New York's WNET, Los Angeles's KCET, and Boston's WGBH. The prevailing feeling at these stations is that if for-profit cultural cable is here to stay, then public televison should exploit it. In response, each has set up operations to produce for cable—and for other media like broadcast, videocassettes, and videodiscs—to earn money for the station. Even more significantly, the three are joining forces to negotiate coventures with cable-TV companies.

Negotiations are now being pursued by an informal entity temporarily named 28/2/13 Productions (the numbers are the channel designations of KCET, WGBH, and WNET, respectively). "We will incorporate as a separate entity when we need to," explains David M. Davis, head of the low-profile group. Davis, who once managed WGBH and later was in charge of all public-TV grants at the Ford Foundation, says he's having discussions with four cable firms.

As with any PBS venture into competition with the private sector, a deal between 28/2/13 and cable TV would surely provoke an outcry from critics claiming public funds are being used to support a commercial enterprise. Another question that would have to be confronted is whether local station fund-raising efforts would be scuttled by coventures between those stations and private companies. After all, why should viewers contribute money to a local station they perceive as a profit-oriented enterprise?

Public broadcasting has always been defined as an alternative to commercially viable television. If, through cable technology, performing arts and cultural programs on TV become commercially viable, then public television will have to redefine itself. Of course, nothing has yet happened to prove that the scenario will develop as CBS Cable hopes—and PBS fears. But major changes are imminent, and the smart money inside public broadcasting is betting on cooperation with the new cable services as the best solution. And whatever shape the future of public TV takes, the chief beneficiaries will be lovers of culture who, in the past, were handed the TV programming they like in small measures. As all the new services begin to compete, such viewers may soon face the dilemma long experienced by those who prefer soap operas and situation comedies: which channel to watch? ■

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Gondolas bob against the pilings in the shadow of Santa Maria della Salute.

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THE EVENT

In Venice there is a buoyant joy these days. They have capped the artesian wells and the city is no longer sinking into the sea. And now her carnivals—the wonder of the world centuries ago—have returned with a glory unmatched by other well-known pre-Lenten festivities.

With typical Venetian flair, the city has combined theater with *festa*, creating an ingenuous blend of culture and frolic that has enjoyed a surprising success. Last year's event jammed the city with 200,000 celebrants. For this year's *Carnevale di Venezia '81* (February 26-March 3), more are expected.

No one who was there last year will soon forget it. Theatrical groups from seven nations, playing in seven theaters, gave 130 performances in six days and nights. Wandering groups of players and musicians performed in the streets and squares to crowds pouring into Venice from all over Italy. In churches and halls, Venetians were taught the arts of makeup and cost ming. Many disguised themselves as ancient carnival figures—Pantaloon, Pierrot, Columbine—while even a few dogs in costume appeared as four-footed Harlequins.

The result was a blending of theater and carnival, of make-believe and reality. One left the playhouse only to find oneself being escorted through the streets by masquers. The city became a giant Theater of Life. In the midst of the revels, time became magically subject to whim. The stones of Venice seemed to echo calls and cries of past centuries. In the crowded *calli* and piazzas, each encounter, each exchange, became a creative moment.

The pre-Lenten carnival (in Latin, *carnem levare* is "to take away meat") had an additional meaning in Venice. Countess Maria Teresa Foscolo, descendent of the famous doge Francesco Foscari, explains that the festivity in the time of the Republic was also a temporary freeing from social inhibitions and restrictive codes of conduct. "The way a person dressed revealed his class, his origins. This, in turn, invoked rules of behavior—social and sexual. A costume with mask was a form of release. So the Republic provided for two months of carnival, from Christmas to Lent."

Federico Fontanella, president of the Venice tourist association, and a prominent Venetian lawyer, led the city to its initial carnival revival in 1979. It was an unexpected success and the next year, Maurizio Scaparro, director of the Biennale Teatro, boldly decided to join theater with carnival, moving Venice's annual international theater festival from September to February.

February in Venice usually brings rain and an ebb tide in tourism (though it did not rain at last year's carnival). It allows the Venetians the leisure to serve themselves, rather than others. Thus they tend to feel this is *their* carnival, which also helps explain why they enjoy it so much. Scaparro, at 46 an established theater director and impresario, says, "The danger of tourism in Venice, besides its obvious advantages, is that every manifestation becomes touristic. February is not linked to tourism. It belongs to the Venetians and it's an ideal time to bring theater to the masses."

Theatrical performances will begin February 23, three days prior to the

FULVIO ROITER

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onset of the carnival, and continue through March 4, Shrove Tuesday (Martedi Grasso—Fat Tuesday—in Italy, Mardi Gras in France). The theme this year is Reason, with 18 plays by authors from the 18th-century period of the Enlightenment—Goldoni, Gozzi, Voltaire, Crebillon—presented in company with the work of their contemporaries from Spain, Portugal, and possibly Eastern Europe. Theater companies from France, Spain, Ireland, Germany, and Italy will participate.

There will also be an exhibition at Palazzo Grassi of *Travels of Italian Comedians in 18th-Century Europe*. Scaparro explains, "It's not a travelogue of the commedia dell' arte, but rather a documented study of theater at the time and the crisis it encountered in the new social order."

Scaparro detects a link between the use of reason and masking. "Both acts are in search of a new reality. The concept of rationality, under a thousand enigmatic maskings, contains within itself just the contrary—the idea of crisis. It is precisely this that allows us to make a parallel between the crisis of the settecento and our own era, with its paralysis of institutions, its breakdown in rule and law. This parallel should occur naturally to those at the carnival. And wandering troubadors and players will have Reason as their theme. Instead of singing 'O Mari,' they play Mozart and recite Diderot or Voltaire."

At Harry's Bar, owner Arrigo Cipriani sat at Ernest Hemingway's old table and paraphrased Corbusier: "Venice is a city of the future, not the past." Hemingway's great love, Adriana Ivancich (Renata in *Across the River and Into the Trees*) recalled, "Papa always said this place was made to measure for a man walking upright."

The carnival traditionally closes with the burning of a masked figure (Pantaloon) in St. Mark's. The ritual has several meanings linked to age, money, liberation. Luisa Alfieri, wife of the publisher, joined her sons in dancing through the night and gave her version of the spectacle: "The burning symbolizes the shedding of sin in preparation for Lent." ■

Curtis Bill Pepper is a novelist and journalist based in Rome and New York. His most recent book, *Marco*, is a novel.

THE CITY

Blame it on Attila and the Huns, on the Goths, and on other marauders who came thundering down from the north to ravage the cities of the Veneto—Padua, Concordia, Altinum. The urbanites who lived there fled into the swampy estuary where rivers fed by the melting snows gushing from the Alps formed a reed-bordered lagoon as they emptied into the Adriatic. Before the flight began, these reefs and swamplands had been inhabited by fishermen or by rich Romans in the second homes that they used as lodges from which to hunt duck—even as Hemingway's colonel was to do centuries later in *Across the River and Into the Trees*.

These migrants—refugees, really—built themselves into a republic that lasted for 1,000 years, the longest on political record, held together by a race of "new men," as Goethe was to call them, guided by what they remembered of the rules of Rome, but independent all the same—and different. Led by a doge, they emerged as a great naval

Young revelers, in bright costume, left, cluster around a column in St. Mark's Square during last year's Carnevale. Dressed in sinister black, carnival participants, below, patrol a piazza—"each encounter, each exchange, became a creative moment."

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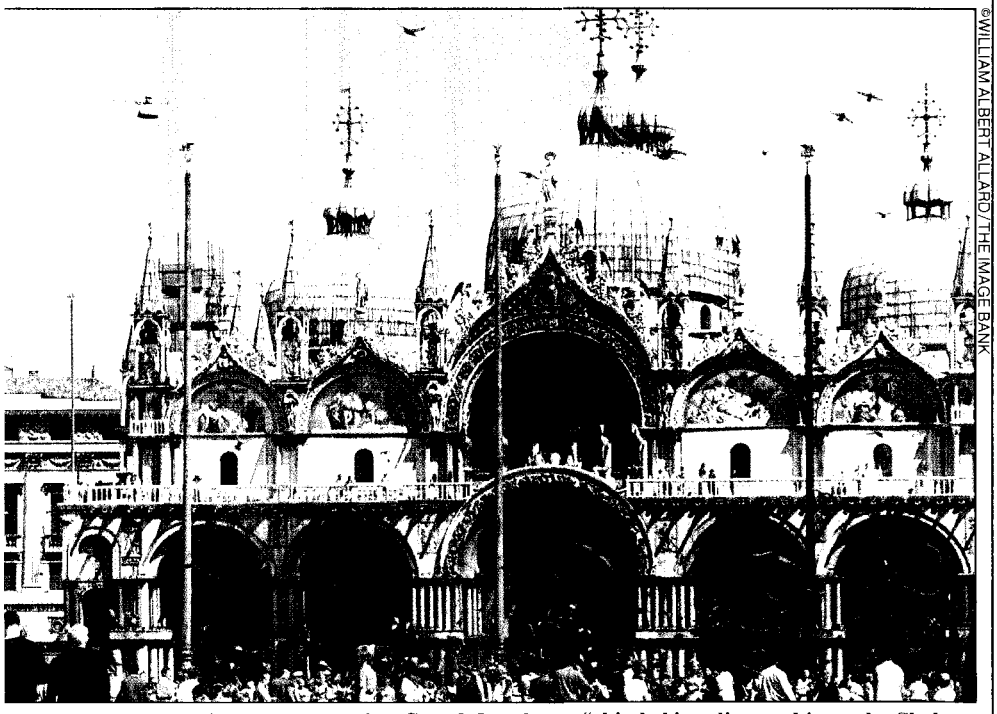
ERIC G. CARLE/SHOSTAL ASSOCIATES



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Rialto Bridge, top, spanning Grand Canal, was "chiseled into literary history by Shakespeare." Ornate domes float over St. Mark's Cathedral, above, "a doorway to the East."

power, enriching themselves on the Crusades, and—until Vasco da Gama found another route to India—on their trade with the East, sending their galleys into the Orient. Clad in silks, redolent of spices, Venetians lived in exotic flamboyance—especially during Carnevale, when the restraints that remained were untethered.

When Napoleon dissolved the republic in 1797, the city was handed to the Austrians and became then a fantasy for tourists. There was St. Mark's Cathedral, gilded, coated with marble, appearing as it does now as a doorway to the East, a gateway out of Europe. St. Mark's Square, with its rows of arches, its colonnades, its windows set shoulder to shoulder like a line of elite troops on permanent dress parade, was called by Napoleon himself "the greatest ballroom in Europe." But beyond that, there remained the immense curiosity of the canals, of the soaring bridges like the Rialto chiseled into literary history by Shakespeare, of the tiny squares, called *campi*, the alleys known as *calli*, the grand palazzos, some of which have become elegant hotels, and the palace of the doge himself, a repository now of the works of great artists who flourished in Venice—Tintoretto, the Bellini, Titian, Tiepolo, he of the cold, blue Adriatic sky.

All the world's *littérateurs* came to contemplate this wonder where the grand boulevard was a Grand Canal, and where the citizenry, if not afoot among the maze of *calli*, worked the city by boat, an oddity that continues to this day when everything from crates of Coca Cola to caskets of the dead en route to the island cemetery move by barge. Rare was the writer who could refrain from leaving a personal impression: Ruskin, Casanova, Goethe in 1786, George Sand in 1834, and Dickens 10 years later, Proust, Fenimore Cooper, Twain, Thomas Mann, Hemingway, and James.

Lord Byron left in *Childe Harold* an everlasting literate billboard to the glories the traveler might find here. Observing the numbers of Englishmen who, having read *Childe Harold*, embarked on pilgrimages to the Adriatic, the Baedekers were moved to produce a guide, albeit one that sniffed at the city's "malodorous inhalations" and its mosquitos.

Then in 1950 came Hemingway writing of Harry's Bar and of the Gritti Palace; in 1956 Mary McCarthy with her big picture book, *Venice Observed;* and Katharine Hepburn finding romance with Rossano Brazzi in the flicks.

Today the tourists come in winter, too, although not the great summer hordes from Hamburg and Stockholm, Essen and Copenhagen, who march in great phalanxes across the steep Rialto, encouraging shopkeepers to post their signs in a variety of European tongues. Nor is it necessary in this season for the guides to lead their flocks by carrying bright umbrellas, opened and held aloft, in the way that guides in Japan keep the herd together with pennants.

The Gritti Palace—Hemingway's Gritti and Sinclair Lewis's, too (the two met for the first time at the bar)—stays open in winter now, matching its summer cooking courses with packaged programs that explore the history and the art of Venice. Jan Morris, who has written so engagingly of the city, will lecture, as will Martin Drury, the furniture adviser to the National Trust in England, and Stephen Spender, the British poet and critic. A three-day package with breakfast and dinner and all the talk will relieve those in town to

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Along the Riva Schiavoni, the Royal Danieli, a 14th-century palace—at least in parts—has enlarged and refashioned its rooftop restaurant in modern Italian style, a setting from which to view the rooftops, the church domes and spires, as well as the pigeons, fed from municipal coffers, between sorties over the neighboring properties, perhaps to escape the boredom of being photographed *ad nauseam* by the assembled *turisti*.

Five minutes across the canal, the Cipriani, built by the late Giuseppe Cipriani, the originator of Harry's Bar, with funds supplied by the Guinnesses, has added a new restaurant, heated its pool for winter use, and redone its poolside suites. Owned now by James Sherwood, an American resident of London, the Cipriani spent the spring entertaining European heads of state, then closed to house the whole American delegation to the World Economic Summit. Delayed by these notables, the Cipriani's renovation will keep it closed until the day before Carnevale begins.

By summer, Sherwood also expects to have a reconditioned Belle Epoque train, many of the cars rescued from the moribund Orient Express, running between Venice and London, with staff and cuisine supplied by the Cipriani.

After Giuseppe died last year, the mantle fell to his son Arrigo (Italian for Harry) who operates Harry's Bar. The Bar remains, as always, crowded for drinks and hot canapes on the first floor, and popular for dinner or lunch on the upper deck. Arrigo also works with CIGA, the premier Italian hotel chain, whose headquarters is in Venice, in the care and feeding of guests who wander north to the Villa Cipriani at Asolo near Padua.

In good season the Ciprianis operate a locanda—a small inn—on Torcello, which was the earliest refuge for those fleeing the northern invasions. The locanda was kept open for the Hemingways during the winter of 1948 so that Ernest could finish *Across the River*. It is a delightful excursion in warm weather to start the day with a *bellini*—spumante and peach juice—at Harry's in town, and then take the speedboat to Torcello for lunch. While the pasta is warming one can wander through the rurality of this suburban isle, strolling among the capitals of broken columns strewn in the tall grass alongside the stone chairs that once seated judges in some long-ago tribunal. In the cool of the cathedral, the Byzantine mosaics, first fitted by artisans over 700 years ago, maintain their crystalline sparkle, a gift from artisans of the 13th century for the eyes of today's sightseer.

Venice is a city of *trattorie*, of small bustling restaurants, old and reliable corners, and new and trendy discoveries. My personal bestowal of gastronomic stars goes, in the first category, to Trattoria alla Madonna, down an alleyway not far from the Rialto Bridge, where diners work on scampi, the Adriatic shrimp, on spider crab, and on other delights, amid a welter of bustle and a colorful splash of paintings. If not at Madonna, then one would be at Alla Colomba.

Clad in silks, redolent of spices, Venetians lived in exotic flamboyance, especially during Carnevale when the restraints were suspended.

At Antiqua Bissetta, a den of 15 tables near the railroad station, papa assigns seats and mama turns out *antipasto di pesce* and *porcini*, those giant, beefy mushrooms served with homemade pasta. Do Forni, behind the Danieli, is an alternate if Harry's is packed to the eaves, and Da Arturo does noteworthy *antipasti*, salads, and *fettucine alla carbonara*. There are partisans who would add a day to their stay to visit Cucina ai Stagneri on the Calle Stagneri near the Campo San Bartolomeo for fresh tuna steak, gnocchi served with a sauce of *ruccola*, and the fettucine with sweet peppers and a hint of tomato sauce.

To this day, Venice pursues two legacies left from its earliest times: the retrieval of gifts from the sea and a supreme taste for elegant exotica. Venetian jewelry and leatherwork in a myriad of colors and designs are immediately distinguishable from the severe, linear, tailored motifs produced in Florence. Sfriso sells small silver jewelry at high prices—gondolas and gondolieri, figures and animals. Fortuny's factory is in Venice, spinning out silks. Even higher-priced is Rubelli where some goods can cost $150 to $200 a square yard. Venini does lamps and vases; and imaginative glasswork, from tumblers to chandeliers, is on handy view at Salviati just across the canal from the Gritti.

In Venice, glass has been made in the furnaces of Murano ever since the executive council of the republic, in an early burst of environmental protectivism, banished all glass furnaces to the island so the city would be shielded from smoke as well as from the danger of fire. Venetian glass can be anything from fussy chandeliers to contemporary design, and the factories can range from Premiata, which will take credit cards, to the atelier of Gian Paolo Martinuzzi, whose avant-garde designs, many of them in etched glass, have been exhibited in Europe's capitals. Murano lies between Torcello and the cemetery island of San Michele, where a foreboding legend reads—as if voiced by the dead—"What you are, we were. What we are, you will be."

Far more cheerful is the bustling morning market in Venice, where stalls are piled with tiny snails called *bovoletti* in the Venetian dialect (to be served with oil, salt, parsley, and garlic); with white sea crickets called *cicale*, identifiable by their red, crossed eyes; *astaco*, spotted lobsters, brought from Sardinia; hairy crabs; baby clams; and *rospo*, which are toadfish that carry their own aerials. In summer one can add the mountains of yellow and red peppers, big as party balloons, red lettuce, pink beans, and peaches, velvety or smooth, big as bowling balls.

Sometimes in the autumn, with the duck-hunting season coming on, the speedboat, airport-bound, will pass the diggers who rake the muddy banks for clams and the fishermen in their boots, working reedy flats by the last light of the sun, just as they might have in the long ago when only *pescadore* and Roman duck hunters found any redeeming features in this Adriatic backwater. But that was before the Veneto refugees had fled to this swamp to make of it, in time, a splendid republic that remains an unforgettable wonder left over from another world. ■

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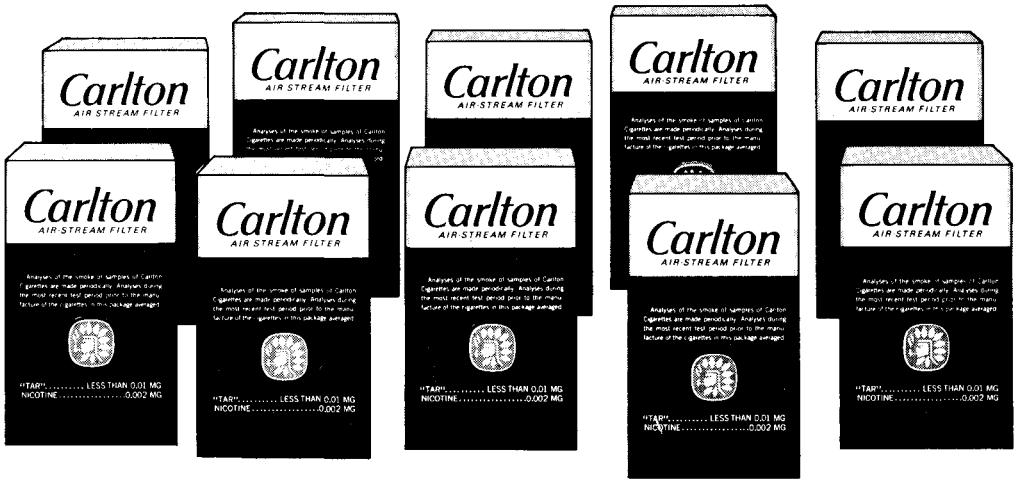

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Norman Mailer

by Hilary Mills

Norman Mailer is one of the most prolific, varied, and perplexing serious writers of this generation. He began his literary career in 1948 when, at the age of 25, he published his now-classic novel about World War II, The Naked and the Dead. *Since then, Mailer has written a total of 22 books, including five more novels, several collections of eclectic and brilliant essays, profiles of such personalities as Marilyn Monroe and Mohammad Ali, and nonfiction.*

In addition to this prodigious output, Mailer has made three movies, run for Mayor of New York in 1969, married six times (the fifth—last November to legitimize two children, followed a few days later by a Haitian divorce), and has had eight children. He now lives in his Brooklyn Heights home with his sixth wife, Norris Church, a former Arkansas schoolteacher.

Mailer's book about the 1967 anti-Vietnam War march to the Pentagon, Armies of the Night, *won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature in 1969 as well as The National Book Award. His book about the execution of Gary Gilmore,* The Executioner's Song, *won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature last year. His newest book, published last month, is a large-format collaboration with photographer Milton H. Greene entitled* Of Women and Their Elegance.

In the offices of his current publisher, Simon & Schuster, Mailer discussed the effects of his early success on his work, the difference between writing journalism and novels, his creative habits, and the "private little vanity" that has shaped his career.

Q *You've used a lot of different literary forms over the past 32 years, yet it's always seemed as if you have the most respect for the form of the novel.*

A Well, perhaps it's the professional respect I feel for the novel. I think it's the most difficult of all the forms I've tried. I've always been fond of journalism, but I don't respect it in the same way because I think it's easier. Artists always have a kind of regard for virtuosity, and although the fact that something is easier doesn't therefore mean it's a lesser form, deep down I think most artists feel that if it's hard you respect it more.

I was scared at what I was doing. I was either all right or all wrong.

Q *Looking back on your career, it seems as if your novel* The Deer Park *was a kind of watershed. It was after that book came out in 1955 that you gradually moved away from the novel and into journalism. What happened at that point in your career?*

A I really think the watershed book was *Advertisements for Myself* because that was the first book, oddly enough, that I'd say was written in what became my style. I never felt as if I had a style until that book, and once I developed that style—for better or for worse—a lot of other forms opened to it. It's an adaptable style, and of course when I finally discovered in *Armies of the Night* that I could put myself into a book and thereby paint all sorts of splendid effects, I began to enjoy going in many directions.

Between *Advertisements for Myself* which came out in 1959 and *Armies of the Night* which was written in 1967, I was going in a good many different directions but I wasn't enjoying it. I didn't know quite how to do it. I was having a terrible time with my journalistic pieces, but of course I was having a terrible time with everything I was writing. Writing was very difficult for me during that period and so much of it was tied up with my personal life.

Q *You've mentioned previously that you were smoking a lot of marijuana around this time; do you think this had anything to do with the difficulties you were encountering in your work?*

A No. All it did was consume large tracts of my brain. I was doing to my brain what Barry Goldwater recommended we do to the foliage in Vietnam. I think parts of my head have been permanently sluggish ever since. But I don't think the damage to my head was what was giving me difficulty in writing. It was more timidity. I was a little aghast at what I was trying to do because no one had ever done it before. These days everybody is laying claim to having started the New Journalism. I mean Truman is screaming and Tom Wolfe has been writing manifestos for the last 10 years. But I think if I started any aspect of that New Journalism—and I did—it was an enormously personalized journalism where the character of the narrator was one of the elements not only in telling the story but in the way the reader would assess the experience.

I had some dim instinctive feeling that what was wrong with all journalism was that the reporter pretended

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to be objective and that was one of the great lies of all time. What this really was was an all-out assault on *New Yorker* writing, and at the same time I had—as all of us did—a vast respect for the *New Yorker*. So I was a little scared at what I was doing. I thought I was either all right or all wrong. The stakes were high, but by now it's more comfortable to write that way.

Q *You also pointed out in* Cannibals and Christians *that after the war American society was changing so rapidly that "the novel gave up any desire to be a creation equal to the phenomenon of the country." Did this have anything to do with your move away from the novel form and into journalism?*

A Well, I wasn't taking journalism that seriously. I never felt that I was doing something more important than the novel. Wolfe feels it's more important, but I've never laid that claim since it's so much easier.

The thing that makes the novel so hellishly difficult is that you have to elucidate a story from the material. If you make a mistake then you may not discover it until the book is done and you're looking back on it 10 years later. It's very much like chess in a funny way. Good chess players always speak of the best line of continuation. They can analyze a game afterward and really replay the points of no return and see whether a knight should have been moved to another box. In the novel, you're left wondering.

Q *You've talked a lot about your economic problems in the past. If economic necessity hadn't been a factor in your life, would you have written as much as you have?*

A If I had no economic necessity I would have written about one and a half as many pages as Bill Styron and that's because I'm about one and a half times more energetic than old Bill.

Q *Would you have written the same kind of books as you have?*

A No. I would have written books that are more like Styron's too, in the sense that they would have been more literary and more well-rubbed, and I would have spent more time on them and I would have polished them and I would have lived with them and would have sighed over them and I probably would have taken them more seriously than I take my books, although I do take them very seriously. But I mean I would have been truly solemn about them.

Q *Would all these books have been novels or would you have written journalism anyway?*

A I probably would not have gotten into journalism. I'm speculating; I could have gotten into journalism anyway, particularly with the history we had in the Sixties. It was so much easier because there were all those wonderful stories. I'd never come up with a story of my own that was as good as the things that were happening all through the Sixties.

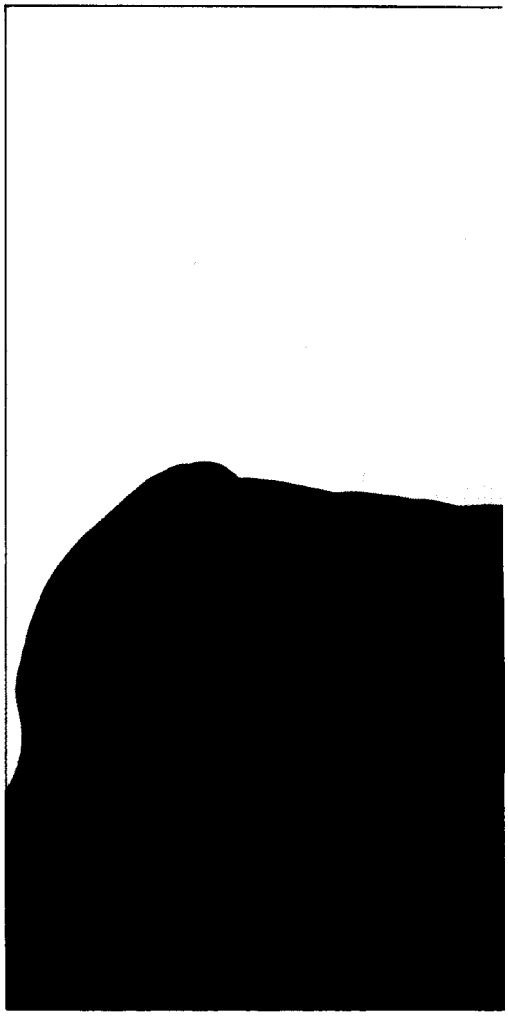
Q *So in a sense there has never been a conscious or premeditated orchestration of your own career; it just happened the way it did?*

A Yes, I've always been reacting to the given.

Q *There seems to be a kind of tragic irony in American literary life: The youngest writers with the most brilliant first novels are the ones subjected to the most horrendous pressures. How would you say your early success affected you and your work?*

A It changed my life. For a long time after the success of *The Naked and the Dead*, for seven or eight years, I kept walking around saying nobody treats me as if I'm real, nobody wants me for myself, for my five-feet eight-inches, everybody wants me for my celebrity. Therefore my experience wasn't real. All the habits I'd formed up to that point of being an observer on the sidelines were shattered. Suddenly, if I went into a room I was the center of the room, and so regardless of how I carried myself, everything I did was taken seriously and critically. I complained bitterly to myself about the unfairness of it until the day I realized that it was fair, that that was my experience. It's the simplest remark to make to yourself, but it took me 10 years to get to that point.

I was successful and alienated and that was a 20th-century condition. This went into all my work in one way or another and will go on forever.



Then I began to realize the kind of writing I was going to do would be altogether different from the kind of writing I thought I would do. After *The Naked and the Dead* I thought I would write huge collective novels about American life, but I knew I had to go out and get experience and my celebrity made it impossible. I then began to realize that there was something else that I was going to get which hopefully

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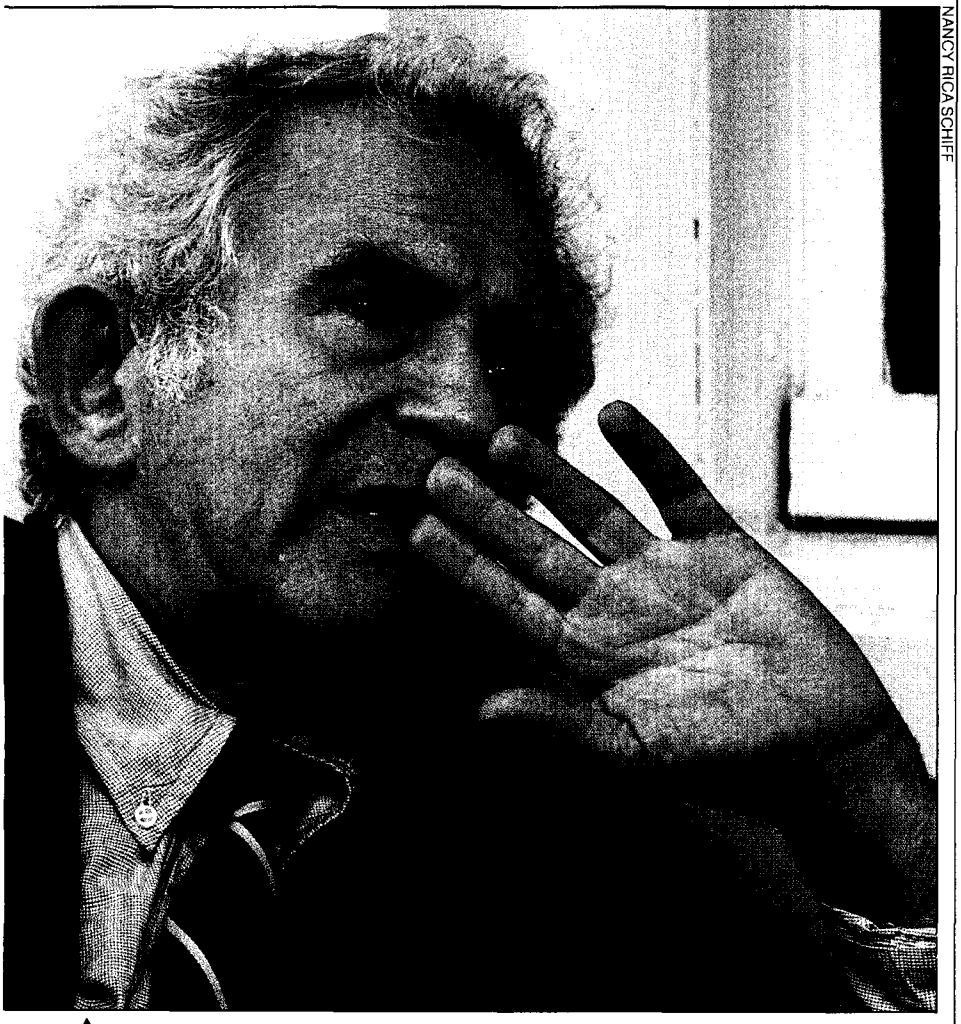
would be equally valuable, and that was that I was having a form of 20th-century experience which would become more and more prevalent: I was utterly separated from my roots. I was successful and alienated and that was a 20th-century condition. This went into all my work after that in one way or another and will go on forever because by now I suppose I can say that kind of personality interests me more than someone who is rooted.

Q *Do you ever think of an audience when you write?*



NANCY RICA SCHIFF

A No. I used to have a much clearer idea of who I was writing for—certain friends, certain intellectuals, certain critics, a certain sense of the kind of audience I wanted out there and who they might be. That was in the Sixties, but in the Seventies there was a stretch where I really didn't know who I was writing for. You go in and out of fashion as a writer, that's one of the periodicities in your life, and another is that your sense of who you're writing for goes in and out of phase or focus. I've gone through a period of about four or five years where I really didn't know who I was writing for anymore, and I must say with my Egyptian book I've gotten to the point where I don't care who I'm writing for. It's either going to be good or it isn't going to be good, but I wouldn't have a clue who's going to like it and who is not going to like it. You get old enough and realize there are gods in the cosmos but there are no literary gods left. That's not bad; there's something demeaning about being in awe of a critic.

Q *Is your concentration different when you work on a novel from when you work on journalism?*

A The novel is much more demanding physically. I've found that I almost can't do serious writing without getting into a depression. The depression is almost a vital part of the process because, to begin with, it's dangerous beyond measure to fall in love with what you're doing while you're doing it. You lose your judgment and you lose it for the simplest reason—that the words, as you're reading them, are stirring you too much. The odds are, if they're stirring you too much, they are going to stir no one else.

You also get depressed for reasons that are impossible to explain. I think we sometimes get depressed when we're writing because we're destroying other possibilities. The deeper your theme, the more you're making it impossible for yourself to approach other themes that are collateral to it. So there's the gloom that certain things are probably not going to get written about.

Q *Once you commit yourself to a work do you write consistently every day?*

A I've been working on the Egyptian novel on and off for 10 years so I hardly feel like desperate Ambrose when I get in in the morning. I'll work quietly on it, but the one invariable is if I tell myself the night before that I'm going to work, I go to work and it doesn't matter what kind of mood I'm in. When I was younger I used to shatter work all the time and could not finish things because I'd do some good writing then go out and celebrate and then unconsciously I'd be working on the continuation of what I'd been writing while I was celebrating. I was shattering my brain and I'd wake up the next morning and have to reconstruct it. Eventually the brain just rebels. I found I began to have blocks and the best way to get around a block is to tell yourself you're going to write. If you obey that promise you made to yourself—even if it takes 45 days—the unconscious will trust you again and begin to deliver the material.

Q *What time of day do you write?*

A Usually in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon. I start around 10 and work till one, break for lunch, and then sometimes start again in the afternoon and sometimes not. I don't like to write twice in the day. It's somehow more nervous in the afternoon than it is in the morning.

Q *Where do you find the solitude you need to work?*

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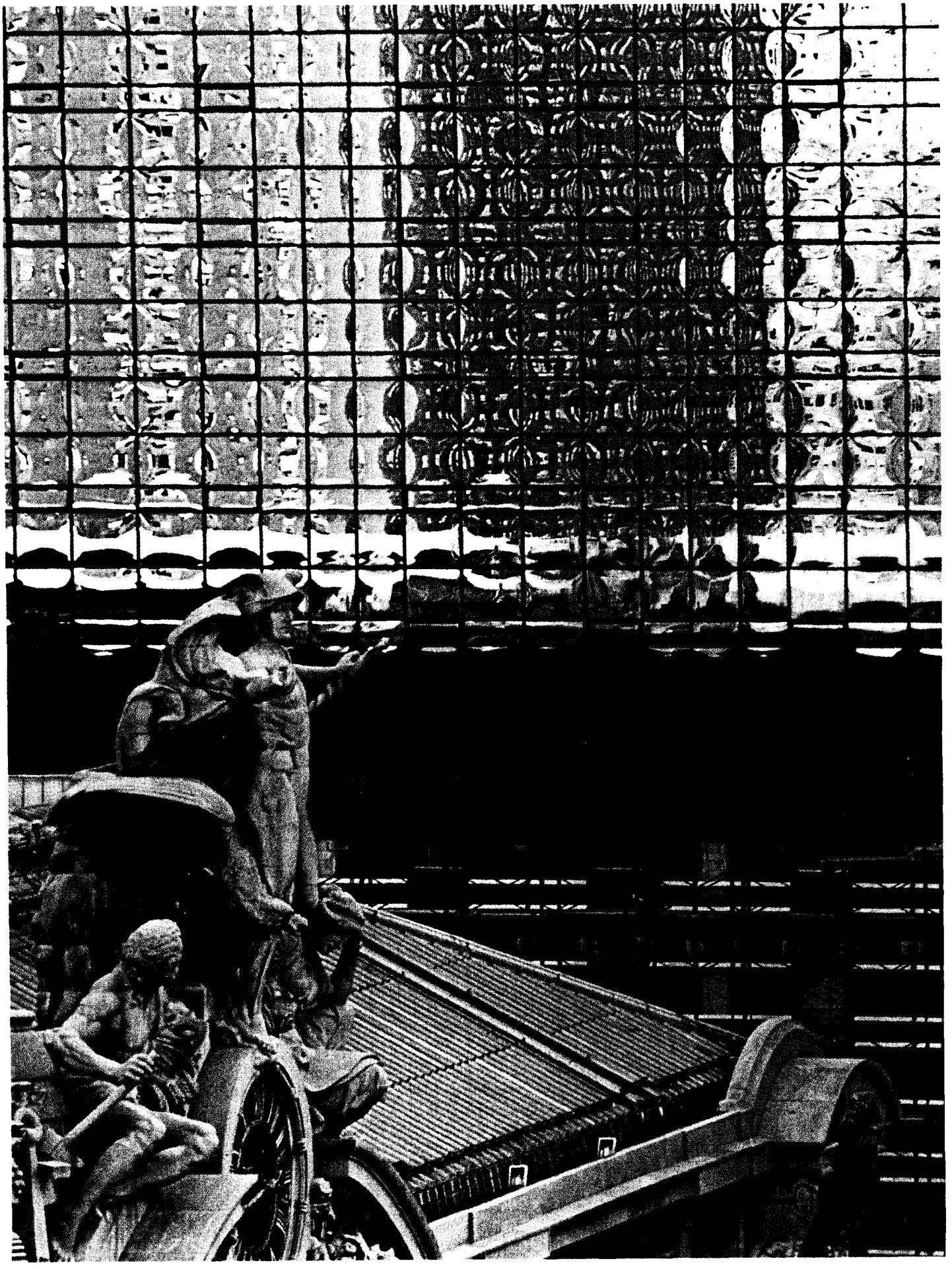

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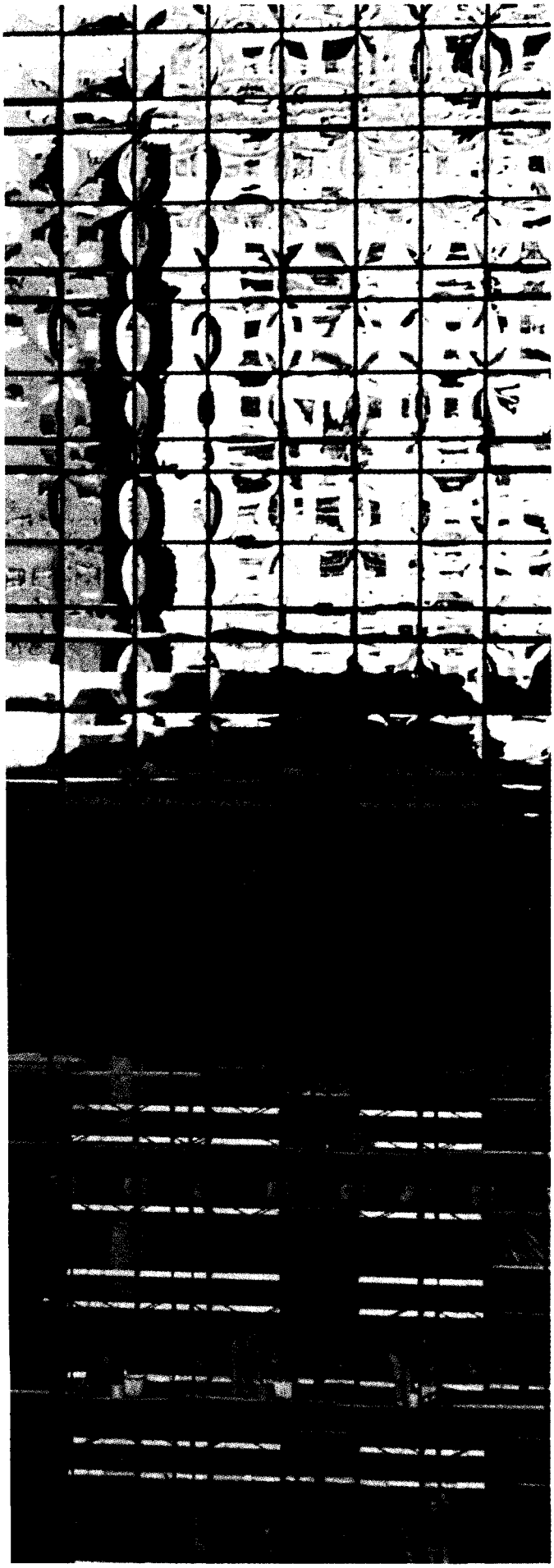

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A I had trouble for a while because I was working in a little room in the house in Brooklyn and it was hell because I was spoiled and used to a large studio room. But recently I found a small studio that's nice in Brooklyn Heights not too far from where I live.

Q *Do you type or write in longhand?*

A Longhand.

Q *Are you one of those writers who build a book painstakingly from page one or do you like to get the material down and go back and revise?*

NANCY RICA SCHIFF

A I'm not happy if I feel that what's behind me is wrong or needs work. The reason for that is I tend to build my books on the basis of what I have already. I never have a master plan for the entire book. Every time I have—and when I was younger I used to sit down and write out a complete plan for a book—I never wrote the book. Even with *The Executioner's Song* where, after all, I knew the story in great detail, I was very careful not to be versed in too many details of the story way ahead. In other words, I tended to do my research let's say 100 pages ahead of where I was because I wanted to keep the feeling that I didn't know how it was all going to turn out. I wanted to have the illusion that I was inventing each little detail as if I were writing a conventional novel.

Q *So you don't take many notes on plot or character development?*

A A few notes. Usually if it's a powerful enough idea about the continuation of the book I don't need to take a note. If I can't remember that, then what kind of idea could it have been? Once in a great while I'll put together a note on something that should happen 200 pages ahead, just a thought the character might have, and I sort of know the place where it will come in; but I like the idea of a book not being too programmatic. I find some of the best ideas I get I receive because I haven't fixed other ideas in concrete and have to obey them. When you know your end, it's disastrous to get a good idea which takes you away from that end.

Q *Do you ever show your manuscript pages to someone while a work is in progress?*

A Oh sure. I do it the way I box: I pick my sparring partners very carefully. Usually I'll box with people who are so good that I'm in no danger of being hurt because they consider it obscene to hurt me. Or I'll box with friends where we understand each other and are trying to bring out the best in each other as boxers. The same thing with an early stage of a manuscript. I'd no more dream of showing it to someone like John Simon than I would dream of carrying a kite to the Brooklyn Bridge and jumping off. But I'll show it to Norris or to Bob Luce, who is a great friend of mine, or to Scott Meredith, my agent.

Q *You've worked on a number of other books while writing your big novel. Do you ever find it hard to get back in sync with the novel after doing these other projects?*

A I've often said that this Egyptian novel is nicer to me than any of my wives. I leave it for two years and come back and it says, "Oh you look tired, you've been away, here let me wash your feet." I've been able to go back to it without trouble every time so far. But a novel is very much like that mythological creature: a good woman. You can't abuse her forever. So I think I've finally got to finish the Egyptian novel. The time has come.

Q *What is it about?*

A It takes place in the reign of Ramses IX who was pharoah in the 20th dynasty. The period is 1130 b.c. That's just the first novel. I'm two-thirds of the way through, and its 1,000 pages long so far. The second novel will take place in the future and a third novel will be contemporary. I've got a very tricky way of tying them up, but I'm not going to talk about that because I've got to have something to keep me going.

Q *Is it written in first person or third?*

A First person and the first person varies. But it's premature to start talking about it because it's a year or two from being done.

Q *Can you just say what the original inspiration for the book was?*

A I thought I'd take a quick trip through Egypt. At one point I wanted the novel to be picaresque and have a chapter on Egypt of antiquity, a chapter on Greece, and a chapter on

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Rome just to show how marvelously talented I was to be able to do all these things. So I dipped into Egypt and I never got out. I'm kind of sluggish when you get right down to it.

Q *It's interesting that when you wrote* The Deer Park *back in 1955 it was originally supposed to be the first volume of an eight-novel project and now you've circled back to a novelistic scheme of almost equally monumental proportions. Do you feel more ready now?*

A Well, I feel more ready but I don't feel ready. I mean I don't think you ever do. I suppose it's as much a question of me, that I'll really ever finish the three books and have them the way I want them. What I'm attempting in this book is a good reach or two beyond anything I've done before. I'm not at all confident that I'll be able to do it, but I'm hoping I will.

Q *Your work is totally unique, but do you see yourself as a direct descendent of any particular literary line?*

A I must say that I have a fragmented soul when it comes to what I think are my traditions because my taste and my loyalties are all in separate places. My loyalties are to people like Dreiser and Farrell and maybe Steinbeck and Wolfe—all the people who were writing about working-class and lower middle-class people. They were the ones who first got me excited about writing. On the other hand, my taste quickly inclined toward Hemingway and Faulkner and Fitzgerald and I learned so many things from them that I didn't learn from the other bunch. Then, in a way, my actual roots and influences are so peculiar. Henry Adams, for instance, obviously had a vast influence on me but I never knew he did until I started to write *Armies of the Night*.

Q *Are you in the habit of socializing a lot with other writers?*

A Not as much as some writers do. I have a distrust of the literary world which is not dissimilar to the kind of distrust a red-neck who starts to write has of the literary world—which is that they are all fancy double-talking phonies up in New York. My view is somewhat more sophisticated, but I think that the literary world is a very dangerous place to be in if you want to do an awful lot of writing because it's almost necessary to take on airs in order to protect yourself in that world. In a way you can't handle yourself skillfully unless your airs are finely tuned. Capote has a wonderful set of airs and he's also impregnable. He walks around like a little fortress—at least until lately. I think there are starting to be some cracks in the wall.

Hemingway commited suicide working on those airs. He took the literary world much too seriously and he's almost there as a lesson to the rest of us: Don't get involved in that world at too deep a level or it will kill you and kill you for the silliest reasons: for vanity and because feuds are beginning to etch your liver with the acids of frustration.

The literary world can kill you for the silliest of reasons: for vanity and because feuds are beginning to etch your liver.

Q *On the other hand, you've put almost as much creative energy into your public performing self as you have into your work. Do you think that public self has helped or hurt your work?*

A It's probably helped my mind and hurt my work. I think I've had the kind of experience that made me equipped to deal with certain kinds of problems that a writer who's more serious about keeping to his study and not venturing out too much—or certainly not venturing out on quixotic ventures—would not have had. I think I have an understanding of the complexity of the world that I wouldn't have gotten if I stayed at home. I would have tended to have a much more paranoid vision of how sinister things are. Things are sinister but not in the way I used to think they were sinister.

Q *In your new book* Of Women and Their Elegance, *you assume the voice of Marilyn Monroe. Was this hard to do?*

A No. That was the most enjoyable part of the book. I'd written the other book about Marilyn [*Marilyn*] in which I never entered her head once, because I just didn't feel ready to. But with *Marilyn*, something was obviously developing and got digested, and over the years, thinking about Marilyn, her voice just began to emerge. I always thought that if I had been a woman, then I probably would have been a little bit like Marilyn Monroe. I've always found her humor sympathetic to my own humor—such as it is.

Q *It's interesting that in your latest books,* The Executioner's Song *and* Of Women and Their Elegance, *Norman Mailer is conspicuously absent as narrator. Is this a conscious attempt on your part to get away from the autobiographical mode?*

A I think I've just worn out my feeling that that was the style in which to keep writing. Because it was so difficult for me to arrive at my own style—after all I'd been a public writer for 10 to 12 years before I felt I'd come into my own style as such—I didn't start with an identity. I forged an identity through my experiences and through changing. Because of that, I think, in a funny way it was much easier to give up that style when the time came. I didn't feel as if I were giving myself away.

And I've always felt as if the way people react to me is not to me but they react to the latest photograph they've seen of me. So I can change the photograph and have the fun of observing the reactions. Also the devil in me loves the idea of being just that much of a changeling. You can never understand a writer until you find his private little vanity and my private little vanity has always been that I will frustrate expectations. People think they've found a way of dismissing me, like the mad butler—but I'll be back serving the meal. ■

Hilary Mills writes a column on publishing for the *Washington Star*.

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A Cultural Calendar for 1981

JANUARY

Continuing through January 4 **The Paintings of Camille Pissarro**, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of the French Impressionists' theorist and teacher. Already open, at Hayward Gallery, London.

2 **Festival of Sydney**, partly set in famed Opera House. Program includes *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Rape of Lucretia*, *Don Giovanni*. Also, jazz, dance, and drama groups. Australia. To 28th.

23 **Mozart Music Week**, Salzburg, Austria. To February 1.

25 **Hong Kong Arts Festival**. Western music, dance, and drama, plus traditional Chinese opera and instrumental music. To February 22.

30 **Stravinsky Festival**, covers all the composer's choral and vocal works. London. To March 20.

FEBRUARY

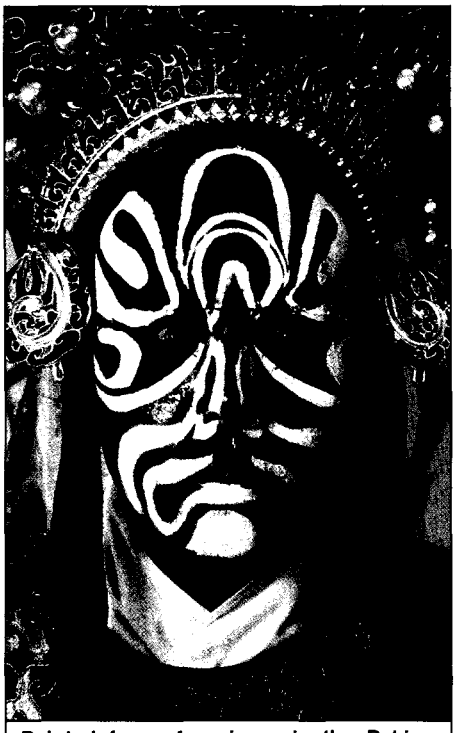
2 **Celebration of the Maouloud**, Senegal, West Africa. Dramatic and colorful procession, chanting and outdoor dancing to mark the birth of Muhammad.

2 **Opera Week '81**, in Kristiansund, Norway. Includes Norwegian premiere of Kalman's *Czardas Princess*. To 8th.

13 **Choir Festival**. Professional choirs from Bulgaria, England, Finland, Hungary, and Cuba will perform in various Swedish cities. To 22nd.

14 **Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts**. Count Basie and orchestra, Tokyo String Quartet, the Joffrey II, Mummenschanz, and Benjamin Britten's *Noah's Flood*. Held throughout the island. To February 21.

23 **Magic Spring Folklore Festival**. Gypsy music and dancers in embroidered regional dress herald arrival of spring. Tirgu-Jiu, Romania. To March 1.



Painted face of a singer in the Peking Opera. Makeup identifies the role played.

HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION

27 **Moomba Festival**. Native term meaning "let's get together." This giant fete includes concerts, plays, dance, and displays of aboriginal handicrafts and artifacts. Melbourne, Australia. To March 9.

MARCH

4 **New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Summer Concerts**. Auckland. To 6th.

5 **14th Annual Festival of Opera**. At the Teatro Perez Galdos, Grand Canary Island, Spain. To April 9.

12 **Jazz Festival** at Voss. Scandinavians and other Europeans meet for a Norwegian jam session. To 15th.

20 **Portopia '80**. An international cultural exhibition capturing the wonder of the oceans and the life of port cities around the world. Kobe, Japan. To September 15.

APRIL

1 **Birmingham Festival of the Arts** salutes the arts of Mexico with the Ballet Folklorico Nacional de Mexico. The conductor of the Mexico City Symphony will conduct the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. To 12th.

10 **23rd Osaka International Festival**, presenting Japanese cultural arts with a program of Western classical music and ballet. Osaka Festival Hall. To 28th.

15 (approx.) **Festival of Flanders**. Music, ballet, and drama in cities throughout the province. Belgium. To October 31.

15 (approx.) **Stratford-upon-Avon** season of Shakespeare plays performed by world-renowned company. England. To January 1982.

24 **International Song Contest**. Cavan, Ireland. To 26th.

26 **Easter Sunday Fair** in Greece. The nation's leading holiday is celebrated with traditional dances in regional costumes.

30 **Walpurgis Night**. Unique Swedish festival, celebrating arrival of spring, with song and dance.

MAY

1 **Festival of Bassari People**, Senegal, West Africa. Exotic tribal dancing, processions, and feasting highlight this 1,000-year-old celebration by a prominent tribe.

4 **Moscow Stars**. The Soviet Union's best ballet, opera, drama, and folk dancing performed at this annual festival. To 15th.

8 **Bach Music Festival**. Choir, orchestra, and soloists of Bethlehem, Pa. At Lehigh University. Also 9th, 15th, 16th.

8 **Pitlochry Festival Theater Season**. Annual festival of drama, music, and the arts in Scottish Highlands. Seven plays presented in repertory. To October 3.

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JAPAN THE SECOND TIME AROUND

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"Our trip has given us a wealth of memories: the tame deer we fed in Nara, the ikebana flower arranging class I took, the village of pottery craftsmen we visited where we both had turns at the potter's wheel.

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13 **Cannes Film Festival**. Film talent from all over the world meets in this festive city on the French Riviera. To 29th.

15 (approx.) **Athens Festival**. Greek drama, music, opera, and ballet in Atticus Theater at foot of Acropolis. To September.

15 (approx.) **Drottningholm Court Theater**. 18th-century opera performed in Europe's oldest rococo theater, still used with elaborate 18th-century stage mechanism. Stockholm. To mid-September.

18 **English Bach Festival**. A great musical occasion at London's Festival Hall. The composer's works presented with those of his contemporaries. To 23rd.

18 **Malvern Festival**. Performances of works by George Bernard Shaw and Sir Edward Elgar in Shaw's former summer home. Malvern, England. To 31st.

22 **Spoleto Festival U.S.A.** An arts festival that originated in Spoleto, Italy, now presented in Charleston, S.C., with ballet, modern and folk dance, symphonic music, theater, visual arts. To June 7.

27 **Glyndebourne Festival Opera Season**. Mozart performed in John Christie's famous opera house in idyllic countryside setting. England. To August 11.

28 **The Shaw Festival**, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Plays of GBS and his contemporaries. Canada. To October 5.

JUNE

1 **Holland Festival**. Concerts, opera, chamber music, ballet, plays, exhibitions, in Amsterdam, The Hague, Scheveningen, Rotterdam, Utrecht. To 23rd.

12 **Aldeburgh Festival** of music and the arts founded by the great English composer, Benjamin Britten, and now held in his memory. To 28th.

15 (approx.) **Festival of Wallonia**. Theater, music, ballet in eight cities in Wallonia and seven in Flanders. To mid-November.

18 **Man and His World Exhibition**, Montreal. Participating countries exhibit works of their painters, writers, sculptors, and musicians. To September 7.

22 **Newport Jazz Festival**. America's foremost celebration of jazz featuring performances in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., Stanhope, N.J., and New York City. To July 5.

25 **Festival of Two Worlds**. Legendary festival of opera, concerts, ballet, drama, art exhibits organized by Gian Carlo Menotti. Spoleto, Italy. To July 12.

JULY

2 **Quebec Summer Festival**. Classical and popular music, folklore, jazz, dance, theater, for adults and children. Artists from the U.S.A., Europe, and Africa. To 12th.

7 **International Musical Eisteddfod**. Two hundred choirs from over 20 countries compete in choral classics. Called the Welsh "olympics of song." Llangollen, Wales. To 12th.

8 **Stratford Festival**, Stratford, Conn. Shakespeare and other classics in repertory. To August 31. Special student performances: April 27-May 22.

9 **Munich Opera Festival**. Performances of Verdi, Mozart, Richard Strauss in Bavarian State Opera, court of Residence Palace, baroque Cuvillies Theater, and National Theater. To August 4.

15 (approx.) **16th Festival de Paris**. More than 100 concerts and art exhibitions throughout city. To mid-September.

15 **Split Summer Festival**. International artists in open-air performances of opera, drama, ballet, folklore. Opera performed in the peristyle of Diocletian's Palace. Yugoslavia. To August 15.

17 **Bach Festival**, Carmel, Calif. Orchestral, choral work, and recitals, under the direction of Sandor Salgo, help in achieving international fame for this musical event in its 44th year. To August 2.

18 (approx.) **Tyrolean Summer Festival**. Austrian folk music and dance. Innsbruck. To mid-August.

26 **Salzburg Festival**. Opera, drama, orchestral and chamber music by world-famous orchestras, conductors, soloists and actors. Austria. To August 30.

AUGUST

1 **Royal National Eisteddfod**, Machynlleth, Wales. Poets, bards, choirs and orchestral groups compete for highest national honors, with winners crowned and enthroned. The oldest and most important annual Welsh event. To 8th.

2 **Per Gynt Festival**. Folklore, pageantry and procession in home of historical Per Gynt. Vinstra, Norway. To 9th.

15 **Lucerne's 43rd Festival of Music**. Guest conductors and artists; opera, concerts and choral music. Switzerland. To September 8.

16 **Edinburgh Festival**. World's largest arts festival, featuring all of the arts, and including spectacular starlight tattoo in courtyard of Edinburgh Castle, Scotland. To September 5.

17 **Turku Musical Festival**. Concert series of classical music performed in Finland's oldest town. To 26th.

19 **Zimriya International Assembly of Choruses**. Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Kfas Saba, Israel. To August 2.

23 **Three Choirs Festival**, Worcester, England. Europe's oldest music festival—a series of performances of oratorio by choirs from cathedral cities of Hereford, Worcester and Gloucester. To 29th.

27 **Helsinki Festival**. Traditional and daring series of concerts, ballet, theater and opera marks conclusion of a festive summer. To September 10.

SEPTEMBER

2 **19th New York Film Festival** at Lincoln Center. Most prestigious event of its kind in the USA. Opening and closing performances at Avery Fisher Hall, remainder at Alice Tully Hall. To October 11.

5 **Anton Bruckner Festival**. The Austrian composer's best-known symphonies and masses performed. Linz, Austria. To 30th.

5 **Festival Week** in Aarhus, Denmark. Opera, ballet, concerts. To 13th.

6 (approx.) **Berlin Festival Weeks**. Opera, theater, classical music, ballet, and dance. To October 4.

10 **Belgrade Theater Festival**. Yugoslavia. To 30th.

15 (approx.) **International Dance Festival**, Paris. Theatre des Champs-Elysees, and Theatre le Palace. Through November.

18 **Monterey Jazz Festival**. More than 30,000 people a year attend this three-day celebration of jazz greats. Monterey, California. To 20th.

19 **Waterford International Festival of Light Opera**. Ireland. To October 4.

28 **Dublin Theater Festival**. New plays by Irish authors staged at local theaters. To October 17.

OCTOBER

1 **Demetria Festival of Byzantine Music and Dance**. Thessaloniki, Greece. To 31st.

1 **International Music Festival**. Concerts, opera, theater in Barcelona, Spain. To 31st.

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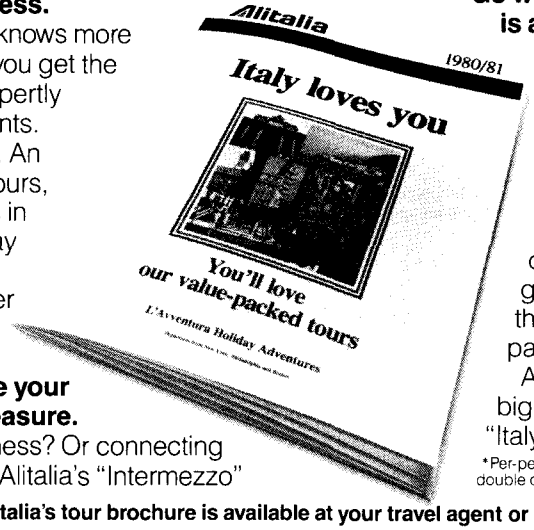

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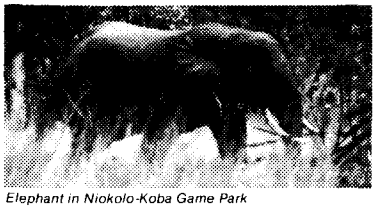
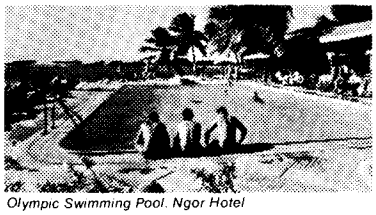
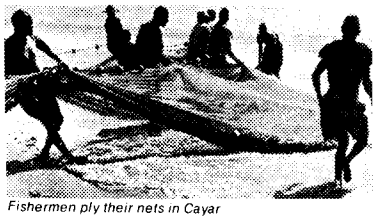


Elephant in Niokolo-Koba Game Park



Olympic Swimming Pool. Ngor Hotel



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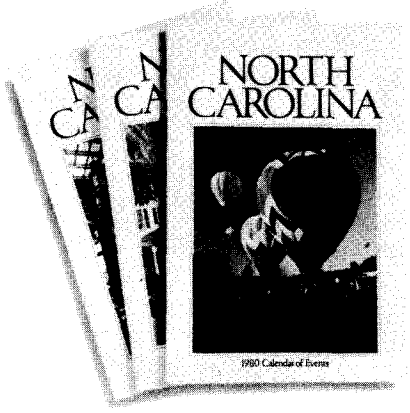

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NORTH CAROLINA TRAVEL PACKAGE

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3 **Swansea Music Festival**. Outpouring of Welsh song, orchestral works, and recitals. South Wales. To 17th.

15 (approx.) **Asian Arts Festival**. Artists from all over Asia featured. Also, special exhibitions, lectures, and films on Asian art subjects. Hong Kong. To November 1.

17 **Styrian Autumn Festival**. Showcase for new talent from eastern Europe, featuring new films, plays, operas, orchestral pieces, and plastic arts. Graz, Styria, Austria. To November 30.

NOVEMBER

2 **Belfast Festival of Arts**, held in and around Queen's University. Classical and popular arts, drama, and opera. Northern Ireland. To 21st.

6 **Chicago Film Festival**. In its 18th year. Bases its approach on the discovery of new films and directors. To 27th.

7 **Folk Festivals** in Hamburg. Music, dance, and handicraft exhibits at a centuries-old fair in the Cathedral (Dom) Square. Nov. 8-23, space is shared with "Kunst Dom," an art show. To December 7.

22 **St. Cecilia's Day**, Guadeloupe. Patroness of musicians, the saint has inspired the holding of musical events throughout the island. French West Indies.

DECEMBER

1 **Christmas Pantomime Season**. Unique theatrical tradition. London and provincial cities. To March.

14 (approx.) **Festival of Mevlana**. Performances by Whirling Dervishes, special exhibitions of Seljuk art and lectures on Mevlevis. Konya, Turkey. To 17th

16 **Gouda by Candlelight**. Candles provide lighting in Netherlands town during carillon concert and singing in market square by church choirs.

24 **Silent Night, Holy Night** celebrations, commemorating the creation of Christmas carol in Austria in 1818. In Oberndorf, Hallein, Wagrain, Salzburg.

31 **Special New Year's Eve Performance** of *Die Fledermaus* at the State Opera and in Volksoper, Vienna. Performers ad-lib and drink real champagne when enacting New Year's scene.

Compiled by Edmund Antrobus

Editor's Note: Dates are subject to change. Travelers are advised to check with national, state, or local tourist offices.

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EDITORIAL
CAPITOL IDEAS
THE
AMERICAN SPECTATOR
Francis Maier & R. Bruce McColm: Fidel on the Run
Stephen Miller: The Nazi Mind
Stuart Kochi & Stephen Glick: Jimmy to the Rescue
Hadley Arkes: Reagan's Moment

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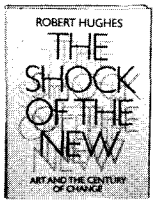
A Century of Shocking Art

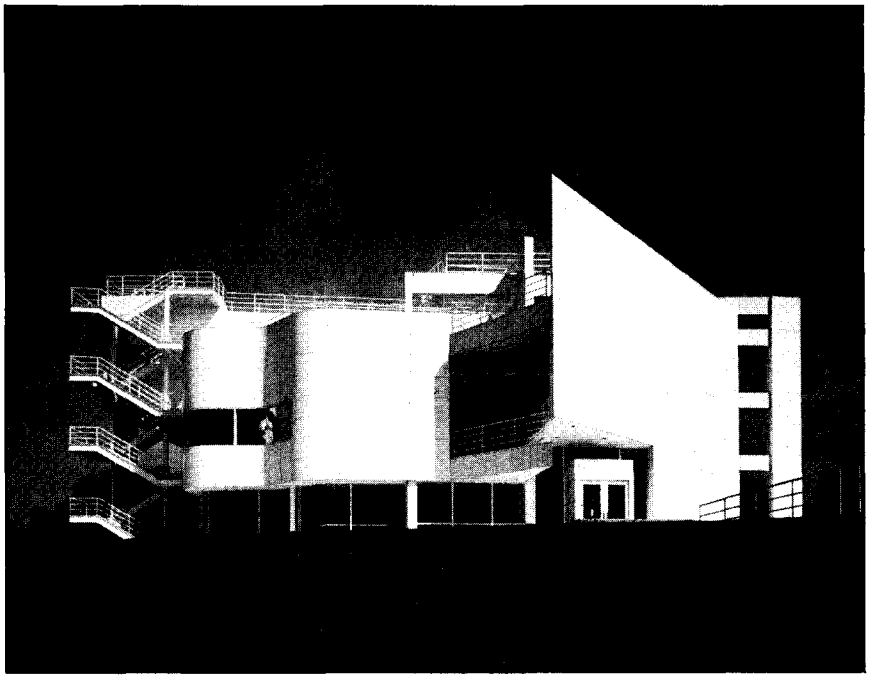
by John Canaday



The Shock of the New
by Robert Hughes
Alfred A. Knopf
423 pp., $17.95

Riffle the pages of the latest book on 20th-century art, *The Shock of the New*, and your immediate response is likely to be "Oh, no! Not again! Not those same old Picassos! Not that same old Mondrian!" Here are all the standard landmarks of modern art, more familiar nowadays to everybody than the Giotto-to-Raphael sequence that used to be the core of art appreciation classes before we got modernized. And as for the title, *The Shock of the New*—what shock? By now, *The Boredom of the Threadbare* would be more likely.

But look again. The author this time around is Robert Hughes, which makes all the difference. There are other critics at work today who are as erudite, or as perceptive, or as skillful with language, and even a few who are as ready to go for the jugular of a sacred cow or pay it reverence, as the case may justify. But I can't think of another (and here go a couple of friendships) who combines these virtues to the degree Hughes does in writing about art since 1900. As for the title, which is borrowed (apparently against Hughes's wishes) from a book of the same title by Ian Dunlop published in 1972, it could easily be modified to *The Shock of the New and How It Faded.* The final chapter is called "The Future That Was": "Looking back," Hughes observes, "one can see how some theories about the avant-garde were soaked in nostalgia for it."



Richard Meier's "Athenaeum"—Hughes's examples "will be standard from now on."

In surveying *Art and the Century of Change* (the book's subtitle), Hughes abandons the convenience of treating each new movement in the usual way—as if it had been born, lived, and died to be succeeded by the next—in a century when, in fact, the movements that we extract from context were overlapping and interacting all at once. Here the story is treated thematically with just enough of a chronological skeleton to hold it together as history. And even a second riffling, before you get to reading, shows that there are quantities of unfamiliar paintings, sculptures, buildings, and gewgaws interspersed among the standard items. You may be sure that these selections, so pertinent, will be standard from now on.

The book's eight chapters follow the eight programs of a BBC series under the same title that is scheduled for showing over public television in this country (beginning January 11), but the book is much more than a transcription. Each chapter, Hughes says, is approximately five times the length of its TV script. And without having seen the TV versions, I would venture the guess that each chapter is also about 10 times more rewarding. In spite of the general enthusiasm for Kenneth Clark's *Civilization*, upon which I had better not comment, I still feel that television images of paintings are just not close enough to the originals to give anything like a true idea of what the art of painting is all about. Nor does TV verbalizing about art have anything much to do with the kind of satisfaction that comes from ideas presented in print with illustrations to look at. How long can you leave one painting on the tube before the audience begins to wonder if something has got stuck in

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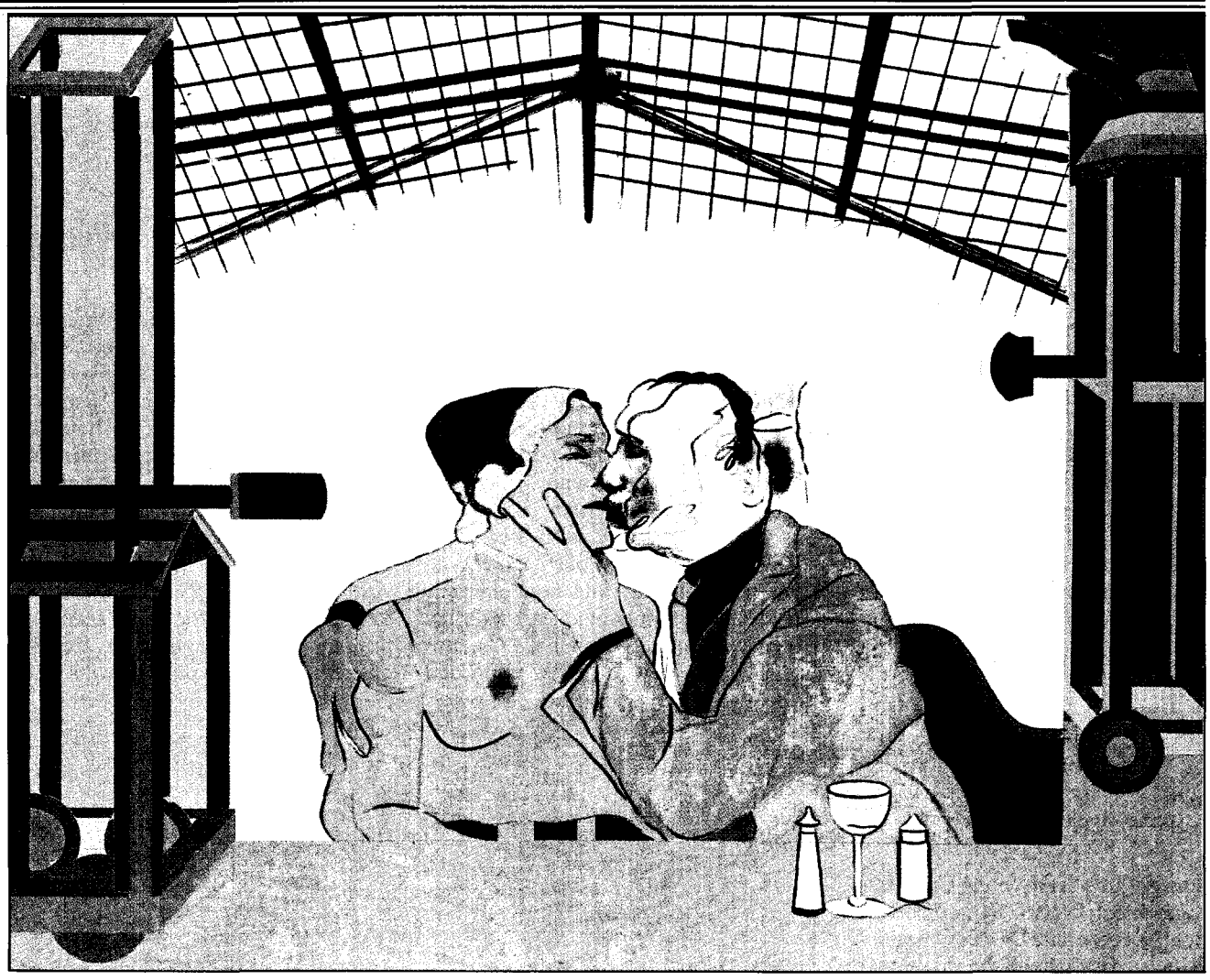

R.B. Kitaj's "Where the Railroad Leaves the Sea"—Hughes's paragraph on Kitaj pinpoints the artist as a social critic.

the studio? A matter of seconds, not minutes—and even during those seconds the camera has to keep moving as if it were scratching an itch here, an itch there.

How can you savor a remark like "Ernst could compress a great deal of psychic violence into small space, the size of a booby-trapped toy" unless you have a chance to pause for a moment and laugh and read it again to relish its combination of wit and bull's-eye marksmanship? Television allows for no pauses—only interruptions.

Or consider this about Jean Dubuffet: "No advanced artist since the time of Rosa Bonheur had painted a cow, and when Dubuffet did so, he came up with an image so absurd and tender that it seemed to set itself against the entire tradition of animal as heroic metaphor that had culminated in Picasso's Minotaurs and horses." This takes a bit of examination, followed by applause. Then, commenting less sympathetically on Dubuffet's "spate of glibly primitivized images" of the last many years, "One is put in mind of a *chef du premier rang* being clever with horse meat"—a judgment with which I don't concur, but a hilarious one.

Hilarious—but Hughes is no stand-up comic out for laughs. (He might make a good one.) The spice in his book comes partly from critical witticisms but they are sound critical observations in the first place. As spice they only enhance the pleasure offered by a nourishing dish. When a new book comes my way I often turn first to see what the author has to say about some artist who has always been a difficult subject for me. (Sometimes the other way around, hoping to find a passage that I think inferior to a favorite one of my own.) In this case I turned to comments on R.B. Kitaj, a painter whose importance I always feel without being able to explain. Hughes straightened me out on this in a single paragraph about Kitaj as a social critic, and I will not hesitate, in future, to borrow from him. ("Perfectly good humanistic practice," Erwin Panofsky once assured me.) I suspect that *The Shock of the New* will be a handy gold mine for a generation of critics and historians just now coming into full flower. And those still in bud couldn't find a better model to aspire to. This is easily the best book to date on 20th-century art. ■

John Canaday's latest book is *What Is Art?*.

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The Murdoch Magic

by Derwent May

Nuns and Soldiers
by Iris Murdoch
The Viking Press
512 pp., $14.95

As an 18-year-old schoolgirl before the war, Iris Murdoch wrote a poem called "Star-Fisher." It began:

There was a young lady whose
Chief occupation
Was fishing for stars in the
Milky Way.
With bluebottle eyes and a
Sense of vocation
She dangled her legs on the
Banks of the day.

Some of this lively young lady's family come and fish with her; some refuse. But her favorite relative is Grandfather Gangle, with whom she makes merry and drinks "astronomal liquor." She and Grandfather Gangle, the poem concludes,

deafened the stars with their
Noisy carousing,
And tied cauliflowers to the
Comets' bright tails.

It is amazing how, after plunging as deeply as anyone into the grown-up world of godlessness and cruelty, Miss Murdoch still reveals in her novels the lineaments of this high-minded but also high-spirited and passionate young lady—who must, one feels, have had something in common with herself.

Nuns and Soldiers is her 20th novel, and one of her best. Like all her books, it is a story of joyful questing—for love, for duty, or for innocence. At the beginning of the book, a man lies dying of cancer: Guy, a senior civil servant, an honorable, precise man, whose fine brain is just beginning to decay. We are not spared the details of this suffering, yet we know at once that his death, which soon comes, will be the signal for a whole round of intense adventures for his wife Gertrude and their circle of rich, gossipy, intimate friends. Gertrude mourns—but one man is already hopelessly in love with her, "the Count," a lonely Polish exile who worked with Guy and now gloomily ticks off the names of at least six other men who might be his rivals for this attractive widow. Another important figure has also just joined the circle, Gertrude's old college friend Anne, who has spent 15 years in a convent, but has left it now to find her own "personal Christ." Outside the group hovers a young artist without much determination named Tim, who has been reduced to painting sentimental cats on bits of wood picked up on rubbish heaps, and who usually takes the chance, when visiting Guy's and Gertrude's flat, to steal food from the fridge. He eats these pickings with his equally feckless mistress, Daisy, in their favorite pub,

Iris Murdoch—She has plunged as deeply as anyone into the world of godlessness.

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The Prince of Denmark.

In Miss Murdoch's distinctive vision, the "chief occupation" of all these characters is the pursuit of some kind of deep, inner happiness—a happiness that will come from having the right relationship of love and propriety with a few other close human beings. Money, work, the small grinding anxieties that eat away so much of most people's lives scarcely trouble them. Gertrude is wealthy; the Count has a minor position in Guy's department but "the office was nothing to him"; Anne is looked after by Gertrude, and though she worries at one point whether she will ever find a job, it's not a serious problem for her. Even Tim and Daisy, plagued by a shortage of money as they are, regard the very precariousness of their existence as an assurance of regular partings and renewals of love. When any of the characters seem to flag in their aspirations, Miss Murdoch takes them in hand and shakes them up by dropping portents in their path. A typical moment is when the Count, traipsing home glumly through the London snow one night, buys some chestnuts in the streets from a man with a brazier—and notices that "the stand with the glowing coals looked like a little god in a shrine." There are always little gods about in Murdoch's novels. And they sweep one up into the vision the author has of all her characters' lives. One glows with a constant sense of excitement and hope when reading about them.

This is particularly true when Gertrude falls in love with Tim—of all people—in the south of France, where Gertrude has appointed him caretaker of her other house, in order to help him get on with his painting. Miss Murdoch has often been praised for her evocations of London, and they are as good as ever in *Nuns and Soldiers*. But the French landscapes here—the mountain rocks and streams around the house, which play an important part in firing Gertrude and Tim with their swift and total passion for each other—are especially magical. The long chapter describing the way in which Gertrude and Tim subsequently search each other's souls and their own, coming closer to each other all the time, is one of the most dramatic of the many accounts in Miss Murdoch's novels of the process of falling in love.

Yet at this point, just over half way through the book, the sense that life has been all too easy for the characters is felt more sharply. The painful and difficult aspects of life impede them about as little as those cauliflowers hanging on the bright tails of the comets. Miss Murdoch's triumph in *Nuns and Soldiers* is that she now lets real wickedness and unhappiness burst in on them. An anonymous letter to the Count declares that Tim, now married to Gertrude, is still secretly carrying on with Daisy. We know he is not, but the Count and Anne decide it is their duty to investigate—with terrible results for the newly married couple. I will not reveal any more of the story, of which there is still a lot to come, but will shift, with the focus of the book, to the motives and the guilt of the Count, and even more of Anne. For she has fallen in love with the Count—and justified her meddling with the exalted excuse that she is acting against her own interest. After all, the Count may marry Gertrude, if the marriage with Tim breaks up.

So, for all the book's subtle glamour, its author brings in her moral severity in the end. The quest is far from over for any of them, but the darker portents, the various embodiments of a *memento mori* that are strewn through its pages, prove not without meaning.

Nuns and Soldiers is a very rich book, absorbing, yet with a steadiness of pace and a fullness that are not always found in the company of narrative lightness. At one moment, the author examines Tim's failure as an artist:

> Any artist who is not a beginner faces the problem of enlarging into a working space the line that runs between "just begun" and "too late." The hard work lies in the middle, when preliminaries are done, and the end is not yet enclosing the form. This is the space which longs to collapse, which the artist's strength must faithfully keep open.

Tim lacks this strength; but it is one of Miss Murdoch's virtues. She is more unusual in the fact that she writes, especially in her later novels, in a very loose, colloquial style, constantly picking up the inexact, everyday language that her characters might use to describe their feelings, yet charging it with a speed and emphasis that carry one into those feelings.

"Nuns and Soldiers" is Iris Murdoch's 20th novel, and one of her best. Like all of her earlier works, it is a story of joyful questing—for love, for duty, or for innocence.

At the same time, a Shakespearean aura hangs over the tale. Gertrude, queen of her circle, marrying very soon after the death of her first husband, obviously echoes the mother of Hamlet—the "Prince of Denmark." There are less conspicuous allusions to that play: In France, just before the return of a certain man in her life (I will not say who), Gertrude talks of the weather—"Not a leaf stirring"— and we may remember "Not a mouse stirring" on the ramparts of Elsinore just before the Ghost's return. I'm not sure whether Miss Murdoch's novel needs that extra dimension of allusion, but it never obtrudes on the excitement.

So, with 20 novels behind her, the energy and optimism that have always been characteristic of Iris Murdoch are as strong as ever. The spell of those qualities still works. There may be a powerful art of drabber realism that she is not interested in. But the canvas of modern English fiction would be a distinctly more sordid sight without her.■

Derwent May is the literary editor of the British *Listener*.

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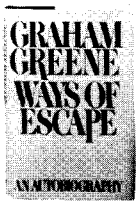
Travels With Graham Greene

by Anthony Burgess



Ways of Escape
by Graham Greene
Simon & Schuster
256pp., $10.95

This work is autobiographical, but it is not autobiography. In other words, it is not a continuation of *A Sort of Life*, that subfusc record of Greene's youth and first literary struggles. There was a good reason for not pushing on with the story directly as opposed to obliquely. "I felt. . .that the future years belonged as much to others as to myself. I couldn't infringe *their* copyright. They had a right to privacy, and it was impossible to deal with my private life without involving theirs." So what Greene gives us is a sort of *réchauffage* of introductions written for the collected edition of his books, along with other odd essays "on episodes in my life and on some of the troubled places in the world where I have found myself involved for no good reason, though I can see now that my travels, as much as the art of writing, were ways of escape."

And so to the title, which like all Greene's titles, has to be taken seriously. D.H. Lawrence said that one shed one's sickness in books, that the creation of fiction was an act of therapy. Greene goes further. "Sometimes I wonder how all those who do not write, compose, or paint can manage to escape the madness, the melancholia, the panic fear which is inherent in the human situation." It's a highly idiosyncratic constatation. Most people do very nicely with games, liquor, sex, and work. And to see art as a bolthole or gloryhole makes it curiously dark and limited. Beethoven's Ninth? Michelangelo's *Pietà*? Modes of escape? Art surely tries to relate the madness and fear to an entity, a scheme of existence perhaps, which enables us to look them in the eye rather than escape from them. But Greene must speak for himself. He will be the first to admit that his work has been closer to Buchan and Rider Haggard than to Conrad or James, that his genre is that of the exalted adventure story. And this, as the world knows, is a temporary way out of daily life's nagging neuralgia. Madness, melancholia, and panic, as presented in fiction, are the anodynes.

Graham Greene will be the first to admit that his genre is that of the exalted adventure story.

There is a lot of travel in *Ways of Escape*. To the superficial student of Greene's novels it has seemed that the author bought air or ocean tickets for the more dangerous places of the world so that he might find material to write about. Not, apparently, so. "I wasn't seeking sources, I stumbled on them, though perhaps a writer's instinct may have been at work. . . ." No perhaps about it. Greene has always had an amazing capacity not just for being where the action was (the mere Hemingway gift) but for being some way in front of it. Vietnam, for instance, and the summation in *The Quiet American* of the aggressive innocence that was to lead to the ghastly debacle.

Some of the travels have not been used in the fiction. But "perhaps the Mau Mau prepared me for the more sinister Tontons Macoute and my apprehensions of ambush in Malaya lent an extra dimension to the fears which I sometimes experienced in Vietnam." And the records here show the known Greene fictional technique at work, the eye lighting on the incongruous and pathetic. In a box owned by a captured young Mau Mau, along with the *simi*, or two-edged killing knife, is "a Scottish hymnbook; a Boy Scout belt; a dictation of fifty words, with forty-nine mistakes; three years' accumulation of letters from a Kikuyu girl; and a careful copy of Hamlet's speech, 'To be or not to be.'" In Malaya, during the Emergency, a planter and his wife drive to the Selangor Club in Kuala Lumpur for a Scottish dinner, with "Scotch Broth, Salmon frae the Dee, a Wee Bit Haggis. . . . Had they reached that wee bit haggis when the news was brought them that their two-year-old daughter had been shot by Chinese Communists at point-blank range?" That, perhaps, is a little too journalistic. The wee bit haggis, boiled innards with a smell of whisky, should fall off the planter's fork, and the pipes be playing "Will ye no come back again?" Or is that too cinematic?

The cinema has played a large part in Greene's career—a way of escape, he tells us, out of the agonies of fictional style—and the making of *The Third Man* occupies a number of absorbing pages. Highbrow critics, he tells us, looked for too much symbolism, especially in the names Harry Lime and Holly Martins—arboreal greene shining through the Viennese dark. But, says the author, if *Lime* has any connotation it is of quicklime and the disposal of corpses, not linden trees. And *Holly* was never Greene's idea. The original first name of Martins had been Rollo, violently rejected by the actor Joseph Cotten who had to play the part. Hence, with minimal changes, *Holly* and a lot of misguided exegesis.

That Greene should be so drawn to the cinema as a mode of escape must

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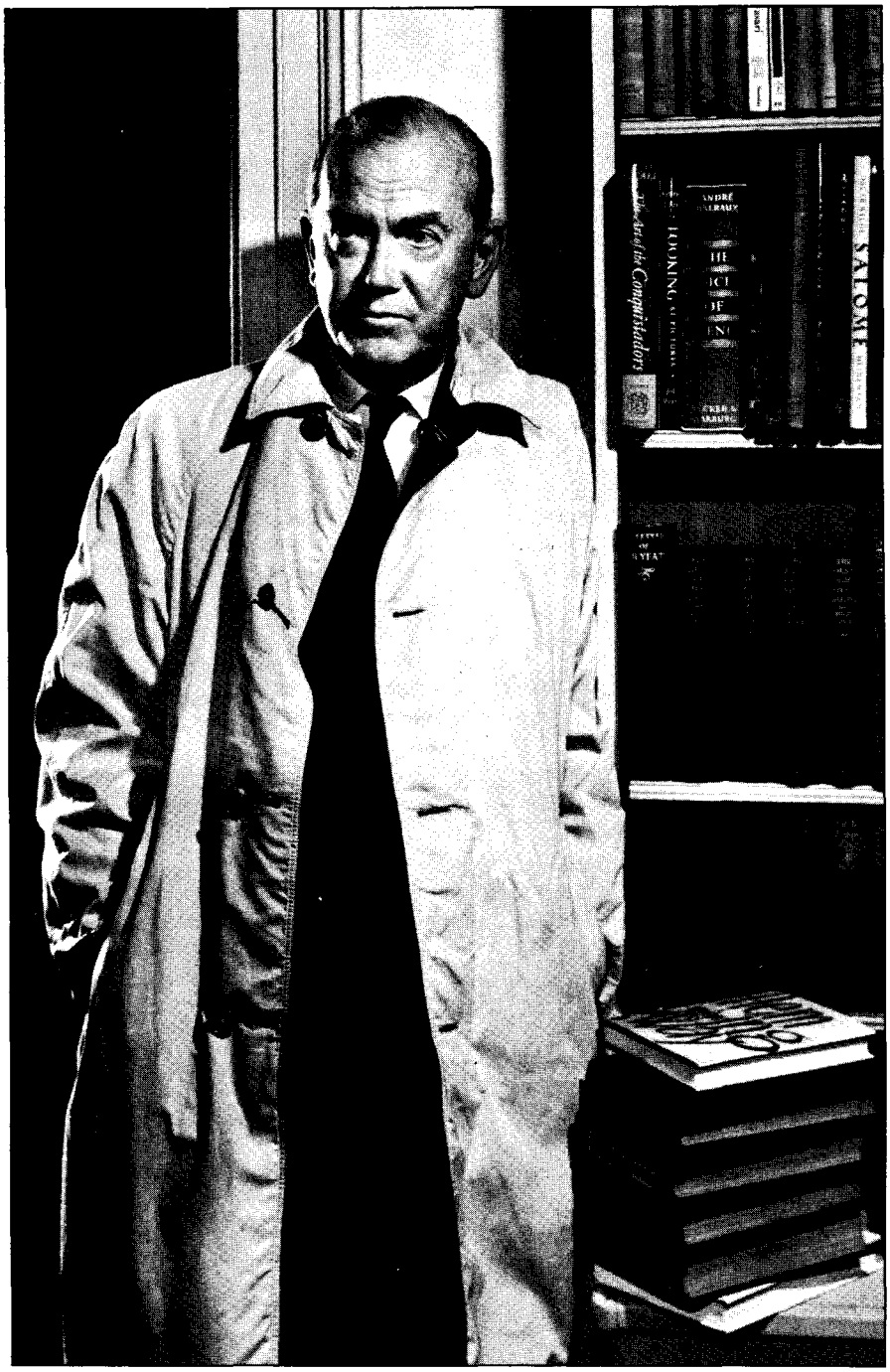

Graham Greene—"My travels, as much as the art of writing, were ways to escape."

make us wonder. After two years of film reviewing for the periodical *Night and Day* (the reviews are collected in what in Britain we call *The Pleasure Dome*, here merely and meanly *Graham Greene on Film*) he was sued for libel by the exploiters and protectors of Shirley Temple. He had said something harmless about "dimpled depravity" and the roof fell in, Greene was excoriated in court, the magazine, a very good one, went out of business. A man of smaller courage than Greene would have been so kinotraumatized as to shudder at the very thought of film, but here he is joyfully telling us of the genius of Carol Reed and the lovability of Alex Korda. "I knew Antibes first with him, and now it seems probable that I shall end my days there."

Note that way of putting things—"end my days" not "savour my late seventies in the sun." What I have seen of Greene in Antibes, a tall man of large vigor against a backdrop of other men's yachts, fond of food and good whisky, denies the melancholia of much of this book. But the Greene vision of the world as a vale of tears and terrors, appropriate to his somewhat Jansenist kind of Catholicism, is usually countered, sometimes in one and the same sentence, by a wholly physical relish in life's dubious solace, and by a delight in its absurdities. The account of his deportation from Puerto Rico by the U.S. authorities is delicious, and one is thankful that it was never turned into a story: Life often does better than art. The account of his doppelgänger, "The Other," an unknown wanderer also called Graham Greene, is also delicious. A story broke in the Indian press: "Graham Greene convicted. Sentenced to Two Years R.I. [Rigorous Imprisonment]." The good journalist in our own Graham Greene led him to seek an interview with The Other, but nothing came of the project. Still, the tale reminds us of the shakiness of everything, even our own identity. Staying at the Savoy in London a month ago, I was telephoned by reception and asked to give my middle name. "You see, sir, we have three Anthony Burgesses staying here." I said I had no middle name and that "author" in parentheses would identify me well enough. "But, sir, the others are authors too." True Greene territory.

There is not a dull page in this book, but there is a lot of deliberate disconcertment. Nothing is safe, not even faith. The crack in the teacup opens a lane to the land of the dead. And, despite the title, there is no escape except one. Greene was recently asked, not for the first time, whether he was disappointed in not getting the Nobel Prize. No, he said; he was awaiting a better prize than the Nobel. "What prize?" And Greene, with the satisfaction of an immortal, said: "Death." ■

Anthony Burgess is the author, most recently, of the novel *Earthly Powers*.

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BOOK BRIEFS

Fiction

Housekeeping
by Marilynne Robinson
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 219 pp., $10.95

THIS EXTRAORDINARY first novel is populated by women and by ghosts. It is narrated by Ruth, who grew up with her younger sister Lucille near the shores of a "bitter, moon-pulled lake" under the care of a series of relatives. The circumstances of their childhood are at once familiar and unfamiliar, like a town seen at night from a moving train.

Conventional Lucille, religiously brushing her hair, struggles to be normal in the face of such mortifications as a peculiar aunt who sleeps on park benches and an adolescent sister whose appearance is "compromised by my ungainliness, my buzzard's hunch." Sylvie Fisher tries valiantly to take proper care of her sister's children, but she is an eccentric housekeeper, apt to spend the day at the lake and arrive home disheveled, with fish in her pockets. Dismayed by the demands of domesticity, feckless Sylvie emerges as one of the most memorable characters in recent fiction.

The sisters drift apart. Lucille accuses Ruth of being like Sylvie, and Ruth's acceptance of this truth lies at the heart of the story. But the novel's central character is Fingerbone Lake, whose "heavy, blind, encumbering waters" claimed the girls' mother and grandfather, and ultimately free Ruth and Sylvie.

Housekeeping is about families and transients, people who are happy in boxcars and people so lonely "they are conspicuous in bus stations." It is sensuous, funny, and mythic, as penetrating as the chilly wind off a glacial lake and as fierce, in its way, as Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, and certainly it, too, might be subtitled, "A Girlhood Among Ghosts."

—JUDITH GIES

Levitation: Five Fictions
by Cynthia Ozick
Alfred A. Knopf, 256 pp., $9.95

LIKE THE COUPLE in the title story, the people in Cynthia Ozick's *Levitation* are all "secondary level"—intelligent enough to see their limitations but not smart enough to transcend them. A cozy pair of novelists, the Jewish husband devoted to a moribund investigation of pogroms in Eastern Europe, the gentile wife committed to rereading Jane Austen's *Emma* as many times as possible, throw a party and find their literary partnership turning to "paper cinders" in light of bitter disappointment when no invited luminaries appear. And in the accomplished novella, "The Laughter of Akiva," a failed astronomer and feared headmaster of a small private school stops short of his aspirations "ad astra"—until he attempts to sire a genius and meets the pygmy measure of his own soul.

The uprooted men and women in these tales are recognizable, "unremittingly bewildered," and stunted in the usual ways. They seek omniscience and fall short of self-awareness. Like the boy in a news item Ozick cites who touched a diseased New Jersey pigeon and slept through puberty, they sense that their lives have been plundered.

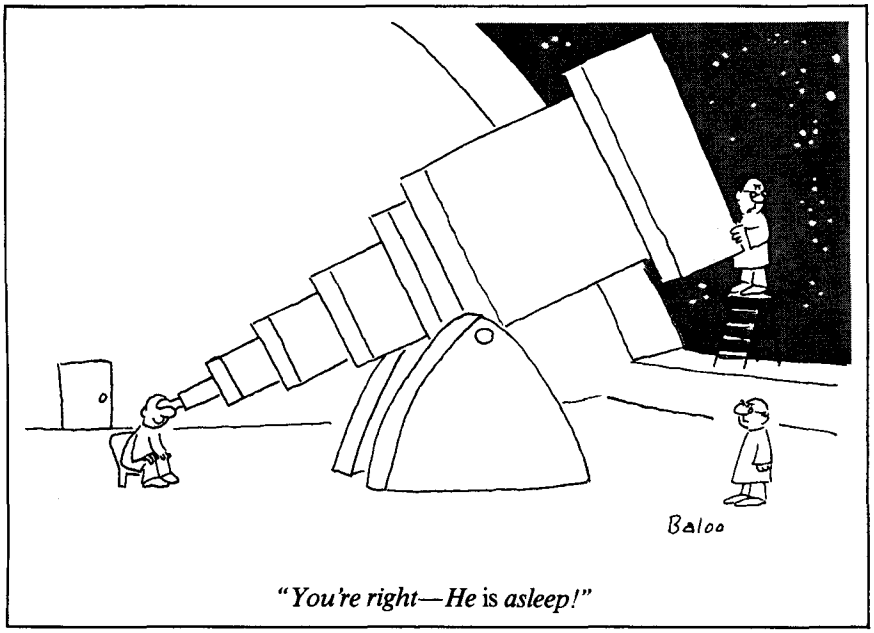
Ozick writes with precision, irony, and luminous intelligence. She observes the "little grains of the refugee's whisper" under a high-power microscope. The view is universal. Her short fiction, like Grace Paley's, occupies a unique niche: It can only be compared to itself. This collection contains less passion than *The Pagan Rabbi*, more immediacy than *Bloodshed*. It is a worthy sequel to both earlier books.

—LAURA GERINGER

Other People's Worlds
by William Trevor
The Viking Press, 243 pp., $10.95

WILLIAM TREVOR'S disquieting novel opens in an English country setting that is by this time a literary cliché. People with names like Ferndale and Spanners live in places with names like Swan House and Anstey's Mill. They spend a lot of time worrying about their gardens, and the strongest insult they are likely to come up with is: "What an extraordinary woman!" But the quaint countryside is only one world in this book. In the other worlds, ugliness and cruelty prevail.

The central character of the novel, Francis Tyte, is an actor with the sensitive look of Leslie Howard and the charm to match. But Tyte is something of a psychopath: He acts only in self-interest and is blind to the moral consequences. After marrying an aging



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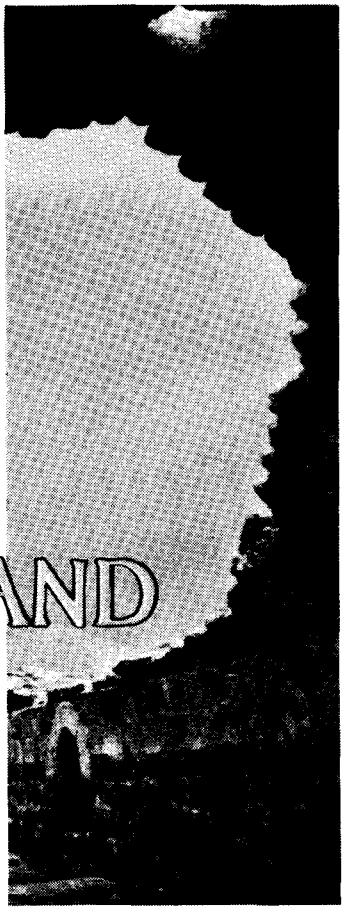

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BOOK BRIEFS

widow, in the hope that she will soon die and leave him her money, he fathers a daughter by his mistress, then abandons both mother and child, driving his mistress to alcoholism and despair. Without bothering to divorce his first wife, he marries a second widow to get hold of her modest wealth. Tyte finally flees them all, but his lies and deceptions bring his victims into each other's worlds—with tragic results.

Though finely crafted, *Other People's Worlds* is not wholly satisfying. Trevor portrays the characters in a cold light that leaves them remote and unsympathetic. Nor does he make their emotional ups-and-downs consistently convincing. Still, he has created a harrowing study of a group of vulnerable people and a willful man who preys on them, and the interplay of their worlds is not soon forgotten.

—PETER Z. GROSSMAN

Love
by Susan Fromberg Schaeffer
E.P. Dutton, 448 pp., $14.95

"THERE IS NO DEATH," intones the Russian witch who flits in and out of Susan Fromberg Schaeffer's new novel, scattering aphorisms wherever she goes. "There is only life turning into life." *Love*, part folk tale, part generational saga, follows the lives of two Jewish immigrant families, the Lurias and the Romanoffs, from the turn of the century through 1978. The novel's hero is Esheal Luria, a Brooklyn pharmacist whose ideal when he was a child in Russia was to "find a woman in America and take care of her." But his wife, Lily Romanoff, wants none of his gentle ministrations, and Esheal soon finds his life eclipsed by the sharp-tongued Romanoff matriarchs who have little patience with men. Misunderstood during his lifetime, Esheal is not vindicated until his granddaughter reaches middle age. Emily finally acknowledges his legacy, and fulfills the witches' prophecy, seeing that Esheal perpetuates his life in her, that she is "only a new step in the continuing dance... of the genes."

Love, as might be predicted from the title, contains an abundance of shameless sentiment. It is filled with flatulent imagery ("... deep in my own cells their

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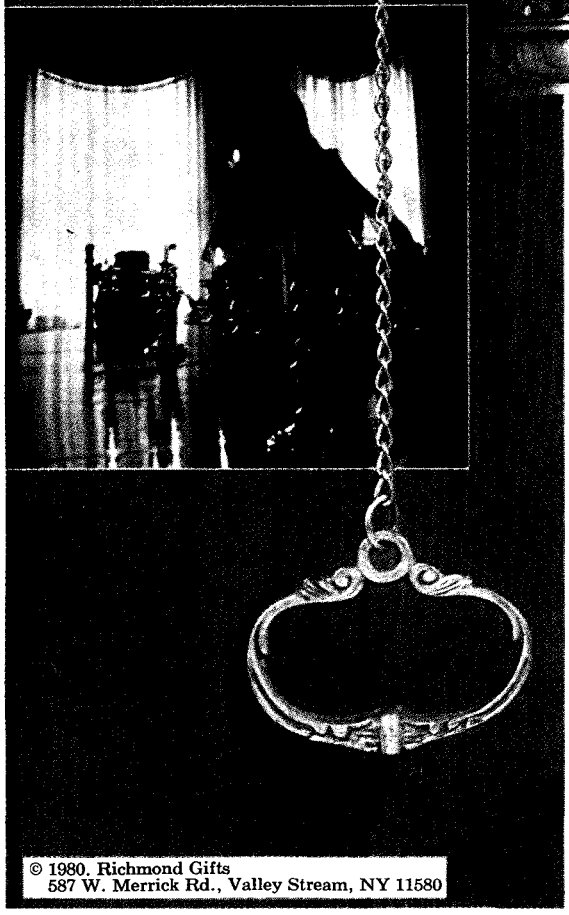

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BOOK BRIEFS

genes shone like stars in the living sky of flesh . . .") and lifeless prose ("The engagement party was a beautiful one."). Schaeffer's rapid shifts in time and narrative voice often fail to give her characters' lives the intended kaleidoscopic effect. When she is at a loss for drama, she kills off another member of the family.

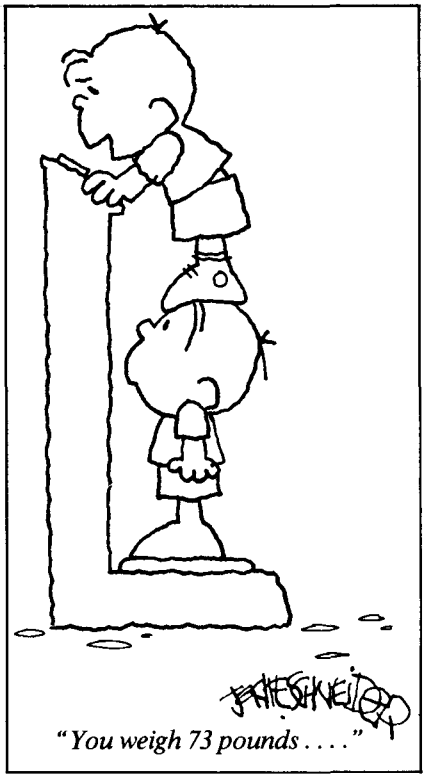
Schaeffer knows what ingredients insure a novel's commercial success. *Love* captures Jewish family tradition, celebrates the lives of the hardworking and the obscure, and is punctuated with wry anecdotes about daily domestic crises. Still, Schaeffer's glimmers of wit aren't enough to sustain one throughout this overwritten and carelessly edited novel.—DOROTHY WICKENDEN

The Sirian Experiments
by Doris Lessing
Alfred A. Knopf, 288 pp., $11.95

WHEN A MAJOR contemporary writer turns from delineating our immediate civilization to creating a vast science-fiction epic, one expects greater success than Doris Lessing has had so far with *Canopus in Argos: Archives*, of which this is the third volume. *The Sirian Experiments* returns to the cosmological melodrama of the first book, *Shikasta*, wherein the history of Earth (Shikasta) had been dictated by the struggles and compromises of three galactic empires. (The second volume was more modest, almost a fairy tale.) *Shikasta* was a lumpy paste of ideas; here, some of those ideas have been rolled and shaped, but Lessing still wants her reader to interpret the message rather than eat the fortune cookie.

Earlier, we had seen documents compiled over many thousands of years by the good empire of Canopus. Now Lessing's scheme has been considerably enriched: Subtitled "The Report by Ambien II, of the Five," *The Sirian Experiments* retells much of this history through the eyes of a Sirian woman leader who has over eons come to respect the Canopeans. She never does find out what the evil planet Shammat drains from Earth—readers of the first volume know it to be our community identification, our "substance-of-we-feeling"—but she does find herself increasingly alienated from her fellow Sirians. No wonder: With her blonde hair and blue eyes she seems far too human to trust.

Neither good Lessing, alas, nor good SF. Fanatics only. —CHARLES NICOL



"You weigh 73 pounds . . . ."

A Sentimental Education: Stories
by Joyce Carol Oates
E.P. Dutton, 196 pp., $11.95

THE CRITICS' EFFUSIONS over *Bellefleur* notwithstanding, much of Joyce Carol Oates's recent prose output has been an unpruned orchard of high gothic romance. The tales collected in *A Sentimental Education* are her newest transplants from the genre. Here, in tones of lamentation, is the stuff of soap opera—murder, adultery, and impotence, with their attendant furies.

All six stories are plotless rambles through emotional terrain as bleak and autumnal as the settings in which they are cast. "Queen of the Night" prudishly chronicles the sexual acrobatics of a middle-aged woman and her young husband, then ends on a jarring note of supernaturalism. In the title story, "A Sentimental Education," an erotic initiation on a windswept shore turns

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into an ordeal of revulsion and violence.

Sound, not sense, is Miss Oates's strength; yet, frequently, her hypnotic cadences are shattered by a crescendo of unblushing hyperbole ("His blood surged, pulse upon pulse, in waves of clarity." "In his arms she was immortal."). Furthermore, there is no logical development or web of inevitability in the movement of her narrative. Each story seems to have been distilled from the subconscious effluvia of the moment. Wordy and vague, they are, at best, accessible only to the most indulgent and empathetic of readers.

—DAVID BELL

Rhine Journey
by Ann Schlee
Holt, Rhinehart & Winston
178 pp., $10.95

IDENTITY CRISES are a dime a dozen in the pages of first novels. Lest we forget how poignant they can be, Ann Schlee has given us a small but well-crafted portrait of a 19th-century British woman in the midst of a life change.

Thirty-eight-year-old Charlotte Morrison has always existed "in houses built of the deep accretions of other people's lives." As a young girl she lived in the house of her brother Charles, a domineering, humorless pastor whom she faithfully served until he banished her for falling in love with an unsuitable man. Reunited with Charles and his family on a steamboat cruise along the Rhine some 20 years later, Charlotte is plunged into frightening disequilibrium after encountering a passenger who reminds her momentarily of her old, lost love. Emotions long condemned to exile overtake her; she now feels herself to be a stranger in the narrow confines of her brother's world and questions the wisdom of returning to his home, as he has suggested.

Schlee's juxtaposition of Charlotte's deteriorating defenses with the institutionalized repression of Prussia in 1851 is somewhat labored, as is the contrived similarity between her own adolescent love affair and her niece's infatuation with a Prussian soldier. Schlee's taut, elegant prose is ample compensation for the plot's lack of subtlety. It carries us easily through the pathways of Charlotte's mind as she projects dormant erotic fantasies upon this unsuspecting fellow sojourner, and, ultimately, reclaims for herself the deed for an identity—if not a house—of her own. *Rhine Journey* is a fine adult debut from this author of children's books.

—SUSAN OCHSHORN

Nonfiction

Ambition: The Secret Passion
by Joseph Epstein
E.P. Dutton, 320 pp., $12.95

THE FIRE OF LIFE. A vulgar drive. Life's gall. Ambition is all of these. And to Joseph Epstein it is more. Ambition signifies a culture's idea of itself, describing as it does the well-lived life and giving the name to failure. Epstein's subject is not just the desire to succeed; his subject is the character of American culture as revealed by the career and sorry fate of that desire.

Yes, sorry fate. For Epstein believes ambition has fallen into "bad repute" during recent generations as its rewards—wealth, social status, power—have grown tarnished in the glare of adverse criticism and egalitarian morality. This is not to say that Americans no longer desire these rewards; they simply deny the fact, often devoting themselves publicly to other ends, like service, sincerity, or contentment.

Who can deny that Epstein has found some truths here? Yet that is not all he had done. Mingling graceful, learned meditations on the cultural emblems of ambition (money, success, failure, society, work) with jabs at contrary social critics like Christopher Lasch and biographical vignettes of people who have lived for or died from or could not make up their minds about ambition's costs (e.g., the Rockefellers and Kennedys, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Wallace Stevens, Adlai Stevenson), he has given us the image of our own entangled wishes and fears. To have so rich an intellectual fare so pleasurably served is rare. Read *Ambition*, and feast—savoring the spice of well-told tales and reasoned admonitions.

—JAMES SLOAN ALLEN

Three Mile Island
by Mark Stephens
Random House, 233 pp., $11.95

FEW AMERICANS will forget Walter Cronkite's opening words on March 30, 1979. "Good evening. The world has never known a day quite like today. It faced the considerable uncertainties and dangers of the worst nuclear power plant accident of the atomic age. And

"'Damned if I know' is not *my favorite expression. It's just that you keep asking me questions to which 'damned if I know' is the appropriate answer."*

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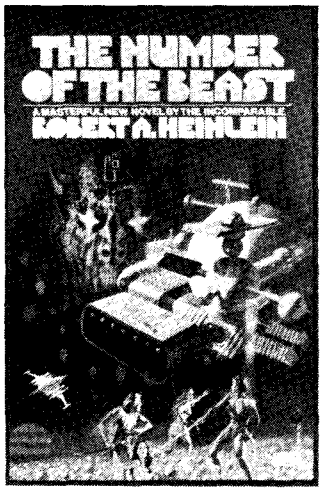
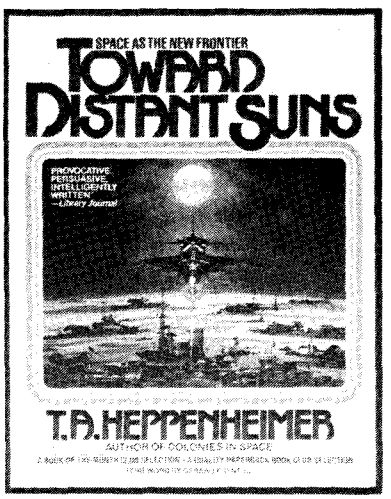


THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST
by Robert A. Heinlein

The future according to Heinlein has always been a world of challenge: peopled by extraordinary individuals, framed by powerful philosophies and infused with a far-sighted social and technological imagination. A new work by this science fiction master is always eagerly awaited—and this is the first Heinlein novel to be published in seven years.

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST is a tour de force that pays homage to the spectacular range of science fiction and fantasy creations from past writers, and from Heinlein's own imaginative past. The title is derived from a series of alternative universes, a series whose possibilities total 666—the number of alternatives for each of six time-space coordinates and also "the number of the beast," or Satan, from Revelations. 512 pgs.

0-449-90040-1 Hardcover $14.95
0-449-90019-3 Softcover $ 6.95



TOWARD DISTANT SUNS
by T.A. Heppenheimer

The subtitle of this book could very well be: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Future in Space...but Didn't Know Who to Ask!" A well-known aerospace engineer, T.A. Heppenheimer, has written a thought-provoking and very informative book about the future in space living—a book filled with *science faction* material that will appeal to almost everyone, thanks to Heppenheimer's engaging and logical—yet surprising—revelations about our (not too distant) future.

According to the author, man will turn to space as the new frontier, and as our ancestors set out for distant shores on the earth. However, Heppenheimer goes one step further in showing how present conditions on earth will naturally lead to space colonies—perhaps as early as the mid-21st century!

Included are such riveting and unusual topics as: love and sex in space, the "real" future of space colonies, changes in the sociobiological future of the human race, a space academy, and robots. 256 pgs.

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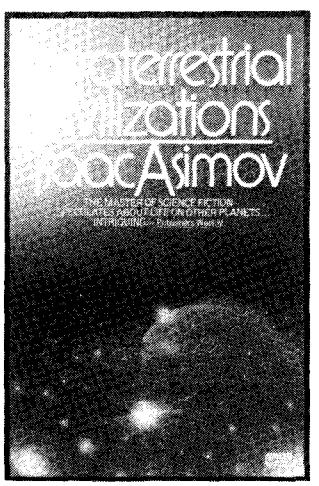

EXTRATERRESTRIAL CIVILIZATIONS
by Isaac Asimov

One of America's best popular science writers explores the question: Are we alone? Are human beings the only possessors of eyes that probe the depths of the Universe? The only builders of devices to extend the natural senses? The only minds that strive to understand and interpret what is seen and sensed? The answer is: We are *not* alone! Asimov begins with the earth and, expanding outward, explores the nature of all known bodies in the heavens—from planets to moon to stars, to sunlike stars to earth-like planets. He shows the conditions needed for life and pinpoints those heavenly bodies on which there is no possibility for life. 288 pgs.

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BOOK BRIEFS

the horror tonight is that it could get much worse."

With that dramatic scene Mark Stephens, a public information specialist for the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island, opens his necessary and coherent account of the chaos that began at 4:00 AM on March 28, 1979, when a blast of 500-degree radioactive steam signaled a problem with the Unit 2 reactor. Technicians in the control room, plagued by poor organization and faulty equipment, mistakenly shut down the vital back-up cooling systems that would have prevented the reactor from dangerously overheating. Stephens weaves in the other parts of the drama: Metropolitan Edison's failure first to understand and then to inform frightened state officials about the severity of the accident; the press's struggle to explain the technical complexities of the situation; and ultimately, the White House's calculated manipulation of information in an effort to calm the public.

Three Mile Island offers a ringing indictment of a business unable to reconcile profit and safety. One TMI technician's appraisal of the reactor was that "it just always was a disaster. The equipment never ran right." Plagued with problems, the reactor came "on line" the last day of 1978—"just in time to qualify Met Ed for a $40 million tax credit."

The real crisis, according to Mark Stephens was, and still is, that "100,000 people were almost exposed to deadly doses of radiation because men in power in private and public sectors put politics, economics, and pride before the public health and safety."

—SUSAN REED

Wealth and Poverty
by George Gilder
Basic Books, 306 pp., $16.95

STAUNCH CAPITALISTS and staunch socialists suffer from the same defects: a crafty blindness to human nature, and a secret aversion to human freedom. So, George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty* is rendered nonsensical not by its methodical defense of what is known as conservative, supply-side economics, but by the moral hogwash on which

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that defense is based.

Gilder asserts that capitalism is a moral system based on a "golden rule" of giving. But examined closely, the reasoning behind that assertion runs something like this: Capitalism is moral because it rewards work, family, and faith in God; work, family, and faith in God are moral because—well, look how rich you get when you have them. Therefore, Gilder concludes, "Equality, bureaucratic rationality, predictability, sexual liberation, political populism, and the pursuit of pleasure... are ...inconsistent with the disciplines and investment of economic and technical advance." If we remove the word "moral" and replace it with "to Mr. Gilder's liking," the whole argument begins to make more sense.

At a time when a reasonable reevaluation of conservative economics is certainly in order, it's a pity to waste time with Gilder's rosy images of Horatio Algers, beneficent millionaires, and nonexistent bigots. One prefers a bit more historical accuracy: Gildering the lily won't make it gold.

—ANDREW KLAVAN

The Life of John O'Hara
by Frank MacShane
E.P. Dutton, 300 pp., $15.95

ANY LIFE STUDY of John O'Hara would be worth reading—though three is my limit. I fear that after reading Frank MacShane's new biography I still prefer Finis Farr's *O'Hara* for warmth and richness of portraiture, and Matthew J. Bruccoli's *The O'Hara Concern* for fanatical thoroughness (love it!), bristling life, depth of judgment, and the big overview. By comparison, MacShane's focus on the life remains even-handed, interesting, but uninspired.

O'Hara began as a newsman, lost every job he ever held, but made his breakthrough in *The New Yorker*, becoming that magazine's most prolific short-story writer and creating the quintessentially allusive and plotless *New Yorker* story in which the first and last pages seem to have been torn up and thrown away (in later years he turned more to plot rather than truth-through-mood). His style was tight, clear of metaphor, superbly factual. In his mature novels, such as *From the Terrace*, he relied on the massive paragraph for sinking the reader into his story. His dialogue was a joy to read. MacShane sets him before us with nastier moments balanced by more gentlemanly (if snobbish) behavior. He lusted to be in the best clubs and the Nobel Prize-winners' circle. As literature goes, to write even one memorable short story is to be a big winner. O'Hara won many times over.

—DONALD NEWLOVE

Personal Impressions
by Isaiah Berlin
The Viking Press, 240 pp., $12.95

EVER SINCE Lytton Strachey ripped the masks of dignity from the eminent Victorians over half a century ago, intellectuals have had a penchant for debunking great men. But Isaiah Berlin is a bracing exception. A man of daunting intellectual gifts and energies himself, Berlin is an unabashed hero-worshipper. And in this collection of incidental pieces on a dozen or so 20th-century figures—mostly known to him personally, including several prominent Oxford colleagues—he gives his admiration free rein.

Not that Berlin sees no flaws. He simply skirts them to go after bigger game: the guiding mental principle that gives a life its unique form and sometimes greatness. In Churchill that principle was a vision of history, which lent archaic grandeur to his rhetoric and moral force to his leadership. In FDR it was democratic idealism coupled with zealous pragmatism, which enabled him to make America the symbol of democracy. In Chaim Weizmann (high in Berlin's pantheon) it was an indomitable will to bring the Jewish state into being while keeping his political morality intact. And in Berlin's Russian friends Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova, the main subjects of the longest essay, it was, in the one, a "genius" for expanding the boundaries of language and thought, and, in the other, an unrelenting "passive resistance" to unworthy authority.

Few authors can grasp with so sure a hand the intellectual pattern of another's mind as Isaiah Berlin. And nowhere more than in these friendly essays, the fourth and final volume of his collected writings, has Berlin made his admiration for others' minds and accomplishments so compelling.

—JAMES SLOAN ALLEN

Those Drinking Days: Myself and Other Writers
by Donald Newlove
Horizon Books, 176 pp., $9.95

THE THESIS of Donald Newlove's grim, sometimes excruciating book on writers and alcoholism is that "most good work done on drink is done despite drink, not because of it." To novelist Newlove (author of *Sweet Adversity*), who stayed at the "uttermost extreme" of drunkenness for 25 years, there is nothing "artistic" about being continually "wined out, hopelessly gross and unattractive, with stunned eyes, a small tight mouth and strawberry boils." The alcoholic's love of despair so vividly depicted here not only wrecked much of Newlove's life—and that of his parents and several friends—but caused him to write some very bad "booze-prose" novels, all mercifully rejected. No wonder the most compelling part of *Those Drinking Days* is a passionate

"Of course I'm impressed by the way you unerringly made your way across 800 miles of trackless waste to be united with your master. Unfortunately, he moved last week without leaving a forwarding address."

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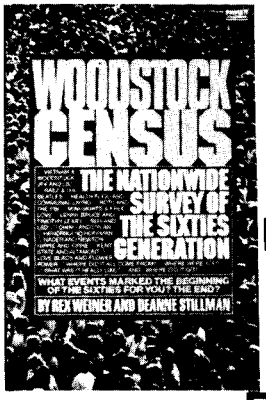

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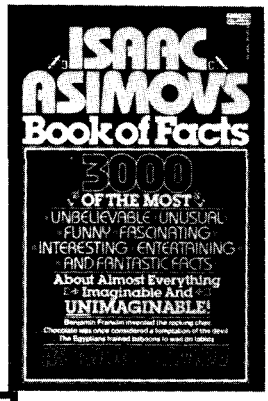
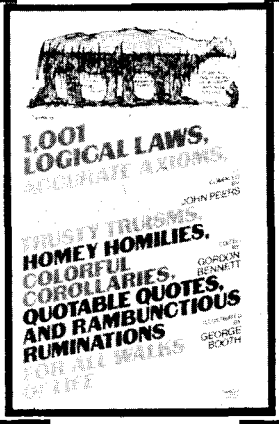


WOODSTOCK CENSUS
by Rex Weiner &
Deanne Stillman

WOODSTOCK CENSUS: The nation survey of the Sixties Generation. For the first time, the largest population bloc in America today speaks for itself and the results are startling, funny and often moving. The 60s were many things to many different people, and what better way to find out what the decade stood for than to take a peoples poll. The author did just that by polling over 1,000 who thought they were part of the 60s and tell people attitudes then **and** now. 288 pgs.



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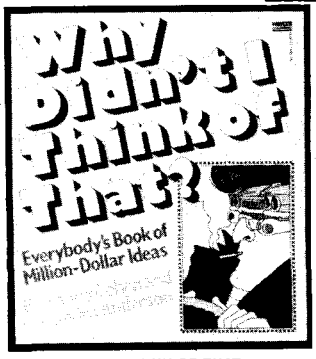
by Isaac Asimov

For all those who love Almanacs, the different sorts of books of lists and similar compendiums, here is a book bound to capture the mind and spirit. Here are 3,000 of the most interesting, entertaining, fascinating, unbelievable, unusual and fantastic facts . . . and all of them true. Here are hours of entertaining and informative reading presented in almost 100 different categories from astronomy to show business, from the ancients to the moderns, from history to animal life. 512 pgs.

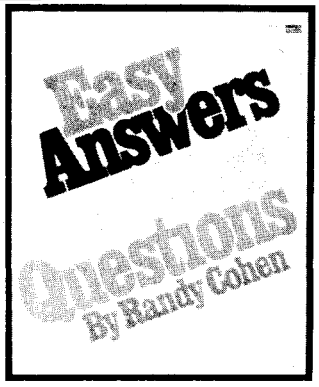


WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT
by Randy Cohen and
Alexandra Anderson

WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT is a collection of million dollar ideas from the past, present, and future. Written in a clever style, the book presents fascinating details, description, and anecdotes of brilliant inventions and their creation. Ideas from the past, such as the bobby pin, the present, like the yoghurt maker, and of the future, such as: an automatic catbox cleaner, a singles bar called Leftovers, on-hold advertising, the motorized zipper, and many, many more. 160 pgs., Illus.

1001 LOGICAL LAWS
by John Peers

Life is what happens to you while you're making other plans. Here's a witty, outrageous book of accurate axioms, profound principles, trusty truisms, homey homilies, colorful corollaries, quotable quotes, and rambunctious ruminations for all walks of life. 192 pgs.



EASY ANSWERS TO HARD QUESTIONS
by Randy Cohen

There's universal appeal in this wonderful collection of unusual facts, trivia, and lists. Author Cohen has, unbelievably, found answers to some of the most difficult questions of all time, questions such as:

- How much is that doggy in the window?
- Which came first, the chicken or the egg?
- How many ways are there to skin a cat?

128 pgs.

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BOOK BRIEFS

denunciation of Allen Ginsberg and the many others who romanticize a shabby disease. To Ginsberg's characterization of Kerouac as "the last of the great Christian drinkers," Newlove replies, "You don't say the last of the great Christian epileptics, do you?"

The only problem is that Newlove's attempts to render the "Drunkspearean" periods of his life are often rather excessive and Drunkspearean themselves. One could argue of course that the boozy prose here is exactly appropriate, and indeed the most hysterically hyperbolic passages do seem thoroughly authentic. In any case, Part II, which consists of empathetic takes on the alcoholism of other writers (such as Hemingway, Faulkner, and Lowry) is leaner, clearer, and full of sharp insights about the difficulty of giving up death. Despite its excesses, *Those Drinking Days* is an enormously valuable and touching book. —JACK SULLIVAN

Notebooks
by B.F. Skinner
Prentice-Hall, 360., $15

NOTEBOOKS is not the scientific journal one might expect from B.F. Skinner. Nor is it solely a record of his ideas on behavioral psychology. Although many entries do elaborate upon *Walden Two* and his other publications, and one lists 11 ideas for future research, the majority are eloquent little essays on everything from lawn mowers, puns, and advertisements to friends, family, and art.

This is not to say that personal life and work are separate entities for Skinner. No matter what his subject, he displays a keen interest in the way people act. A vivid description of a snowball fight in a Vermont schoolyard turns into a search for behavioral determinants. Musings on the Boston Red Sox's batting slump lead to a novel suggestion for positive reinforcement. (The players could be shown videotapes of themselves hitting home runs.) Seeing operant conditioning in such familiar contexts is less threatening; it also tends to level Margaret Mead's charge that controlling behavior is like "playing God." But Skinner only

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occasionally addresses this issue directly, as in this defense of his most controversial book: "*Beyond Freedom and Dignity* was a misleading title. It suggested that I was against freedom and personal worth. . . . [But] if acting for the good of the group is positively reinforced, people will feel as free and worthy as possible. I am in favor of that." For the most part, the notes are brilliantly amusing sketches that read very much like French *mélanges*, with challenging and sometimes disturbing reflections of the forces that shape our lives. —ROBIN BROMLEY

Exit House: Choosing Suicide as an Alternative
by Jo Roman
Seaview Books, 204 pp., $10.95

JO ROMAN'S is a voice from beyond the grave, but that does not mean we should listen to her. On June 10, 1979, Mrs. Roman committed suicide, after having written a letter to 300 friends explaining her choice of "rational suicide as a human right," after having produced enough tape for the television documentary *Choosing Suicide*, and after having thought for many years about taking her own life. She was by all accounts a woman very much loved by her family and friends and a woman, by her own account, very much in love with death itself.

In the autobiographical section of *Exit House* Mrs. Roman reflects on the numerous funerals her minister father took her to when she was a little girl and how much fun they were compared to the rest of her daily life. She tells of her early attempt at suicide and quotes from notes on her recovery made at the time by her then-lover. She details her fondest fantasy—the creation of an "Exit House," where people could go and take their own lives provided they are "bona-fide residents of New York City forty years or older."

No doubt this book will engender discussion, but it is a minority report. Most people do not want, as Mrs. Roman did, to go gentle into that good night, let alone discuss it in loving detail for 200 or more pages.

—ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN

The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth About Hitler's Final Solution
by Walter Laqueur
Little, Brown, 276 pp., $12.95

IN THE FALL of 1942, a young Pole named Jan Karski went at great risk to his own life to warn the leaders of the West—including British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, President Roosevelt, former President Herbert Hoover, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter—that Hitler's final solution to the Jewish problem was outright mass murder. Karski might as well have stayed at home. According to this gripping, disturbing book by the scholar and political analyst Walter Laqueur, Karski was just one of several thousand Cassandras roaming Europe at that time, and his fate was much like the others—he was listened to and then either ignored or disbelieved.

Laqueur's thesis, proved with an admirable spareness of language and lack of hysteria, is this: "Millions of people cannot be killed without participants in the murder and without witnesses." Like plumes of smoke rising from the Auschwitz chimney stacks, the truth was to be seen, if not to be noticed, if not to be accepted. "I can't believe you," said Felix Frankfurter when apprised of the situation by the brave young Karski. A high State Department official feared that talking about the death camps might lead "to increased pressure from all sides to do something more specific to help these people." The British worried that if they publicized what they knew it would lead to anti-Semitism at home and harm the war effort.

The Terrible Secret is a low-key, let-the-facts-speak-for-themselves indictment of Allied politicians, neutral countries, the Vatican and the Red Cross (who knew what was happening to the Jews and and kept silent out of fear). Laqueur's study covers 1941-42. By New Year's Day 1943, the Nazis claimed they had exterminated 2.5 million Jews. One only wishes that this brilliant book was fiction not fact.

—ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN

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LANGUAGE

Thomas H. Middleton

Weasel Words

Weasel words, says *Webster's Second New International*, are "words that destroy the force of a statement by equivocal qualification as a weasel ruins an egg by sucking out its contents while leaving it superficially intact." According to Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, the phrase was popularized by Theodore Roosevelt, who said in 1916, "You can have universal training, or you can have voluntary training, but when you use the word *voluntary* to qualify the word *universal*, you are using a weasel word; it has sucked all the meaning out of *universal*. The two words flatly contradict one another."

I take it on faith that weasels actually suck eggs. In *As You Like It*, Jaques says, "I can suck melancholy out of a song, as a weasel sucks eggs," so it seems clear that weasels have sucked eggs at least since Shakespeare's time. I haven't seen more than two or three weasels in my life. If I ever see one suck an egg, it will be an unforgettable experience.

The phrase *weasel words* came to my mind a few weeks ago when I was visiting friends in Stamford, Connecticut. My host and I were to catch the 9:04 to New York. We got to the station at about 9:00, bought our copies of the *Times*, and waited. And waited. At about 9:15, the loudspeaker squawked, "The 9:04 to Grand Central has been indefinitely delayed." We had known it was definitely delayed. Now we knew it was definitely indefinitely delayed. The loudspeaker voice then went on to say, "Thank you for your cooperation."

It occurred to me that the alternative to our cooperation would be to form an angry mob. "We apologize for the inconvenience" would have been more suitable. "Thank you for your cooperation" was not appropriate.

On further consideration I realized that this was not an instance of weasel words. It was plain, old-fashioned balderdash, and I thought of the phrase *twaddle terms*.

Twaddle terms are the basic currency of most advertising, and they are increasingly common in phrases like "Thank you for your cooperation." The fad in communications to the public by business seems to be to thank us for one thing or another whether we deserve the thanks or not. Signs used to say No Smoking. Now they say Thank You for Not Smoking. We see people smoking as they read a sign thanking them for not smoking.

You call to see whether Aunt Lucy's flight will arrive at 6:13, as scheduled, and they say "Thank you for calling Fly-By-Night." They'd say "Thank you for calling Fly-By-Night" even if you were calling to ask why in hell your luggage went to Zurich when they flew you to Topeka.

Businesses now thank us for our "cooperation"—deserved or not.

This seems as good a time as any for me to mention in public that I find *6:13* and similar exactitudes puzzling as scheduled arrival times for airplanes. I don't know what they mean. Is 6:13 the time the wheels touch down, the time the wheels come to a halt, the time the Fasten Seat Belts sign goes off, the time the ramp is locked into place, the time the doors open, the time the stewardess says, "Thank you for flying Fly-By-Night," or the time you find out your luggage has gone to Zurich?

To my way of thinking, it's a minor miracle when a plane that is scheduled to land at 6:10 touches down at any time between 6:00 and 6:20 after a flight of a few hundred or a few thousand miles. To give the estimated time of arrival as an actual point in time seems ludicrous. Possibly the airlines have arcane reasons for listing such arrival times as *1:12* and *1:17*, but I strongly suspect that these, too, are twaddle terms, designed to make the airlines seem needle-sharp, to give the impression that they deal in on-the-button precision. Come on, Pan Am, United, Fly-By-Night, and all the rest of you, if you say Aunt Lucy's flight will land at 1:15, and we see Aunt Lucy before 1:25, we'll think you're just great.

Among my favorite twaddle terms is "For your convenience . . . ." You go into your bank and there's plaster all over the floor, the ceiling has been ripped out, there are exposed wires to trip over, and you see a sign that tells you "For your convenience, we are temporarily destroying the bank. Thank you for your cooperation." When the remodeling is over, you discover it was done so that they could install Naugahyde-covered ropes for you to stand between while waiting for a teller.

There's a sign in my bank that I like so much I copied it down. It says, "To help reduce your wait in line please complete your deposit and withdrawal slips at the desk provided."

Perfect English and perfect balderdash. There is no way that completing those slips at the desk provided will reduce your wait in line. I don't see how it could affect your wait in line one way or the other. What it will do is reduce the wait in line of the people behind you. A reasonable request, but couched in twaddle terms. Nevertheless, I'm perfectly willing to comply, and I wouldn't mind a little sign thanking me for my cooperation. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann

Troubled Times, Troubled Plays

Like every child of the Depression, Arthur Miller can't forget it, but all he has done in his new play is remember it. **The American Clock** ("inspired by Studs Terkel's *Hard Times*") is not much more than a superficial ramble through the lives of a New York Jewish family in the Twenties and Thirties. Presumably it's somewhat autobiographical, with a narrator-reminiscer who makes us think of Miller himself. This narrator, called Lee, very soon pulls up his trousers to look like knickers and takes us back to his adolescence and flush times, with Mom and Dad in evening clothes worshipping the stock market; and after this depressingly platitudinous start, the play never improves.

The family's plight when the market collapses, the move to cheaper Brooklyn, the adjustments to grim changes, the strategies for survival, Lee's gropings toward jobs and education—these parade past in linear, shallow, unexplored scenes. The only consistent effect is the instant pathos that attaches to memory, especially when the rememberer is standing before us, stepping into and out of the past. The play is performed before what looks like a satellite weather map of the U.S., with furniture and lighting changes for the many scenes, and Vivian Matalon has staged it with complete adherence to the sentimentalities of its stock splitting of time-planes. Any stock form can of course be used well—Miller used split time-planes well in *Death of a Salesman*; but here he merely leans on the form slothfully, meandering through material that must by now be substantively familiar even to those who didn't live through that era.

Occasionally there's a sharp line. ("Any girl with an apartment of her own was beautiful.") Mostly it's the easy heart-tug of this easy form, sometimes varied with equally easy hindsight irony. ("This Hitler can't last six months.") After a ramble down Memory Lane that could have been either shorter or longer because it has no intrinsic shape, the play ends with Lee talking to us about his mother, who is seated upstage at her piano, telling us that she is just like this country: full of contradictory views on a number of subjects. But this would have been just as true of her in Scene One. Why did we need to travel the length of the play to reach that end? And what did the Depression have to do with it? It would have been just as true if Wall Street had never crashed.

As the mother, Joan Copeland (Miller's sister) has a role carefully carpentered with wry wisdom and infallibility, full of charm and poignancies at the piano. No competent actor could muff the part, and Copeland is competent. John Randolph, the father, blusters along with his usual sincere face-making, and William Atherton as Lee is gulpingly OK, but why, for this youth, did they choose an archetypal WASP? The most imaginative, incisive acting of the evening is done by Edward Seamon in three small roles: a smart speakeasy owner, an irritating welfare applicant, a down-and-out farmer from Iowa.

In much of Miller's past work, one could at least discern what he was reaching for and fumbling. Here he seems only to be exploiting his position as a "great" playwright and the fact that he lived through the Depression. It's sad, especially because of the press campaign before this premiere to present him as a master maligned by critics, a master who would be vindicated by this new work. Despite the campaign and despite the popularity of Miller all over the world (which is also true of some American playwrights who are even worse), *The American Clock* leaves

INGE MORATH/MAGNUM

From left: Alan North, Donny Brooks, William Atherton in *The American Clock*.

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Miller essentially where he was—a paradoxical figure, the "great" American playwright whose work is mostly mediocre.

A much more interesting playwright, Athol Fugard, has come up with a much more interesting disappointment. Fugard, a white South African, has written many plays about black-and-white South Africa, preeminently *Boesman and Lena*, which is not only his best work so far but which, after 10 years' acquaintance, seems to me an addition to the world treasury of drama. His new play, **A Lesson From Aloes**, is on the same general subject—South African race tensions and their consequences—but, though it's no less genuine a work, it's feeble.

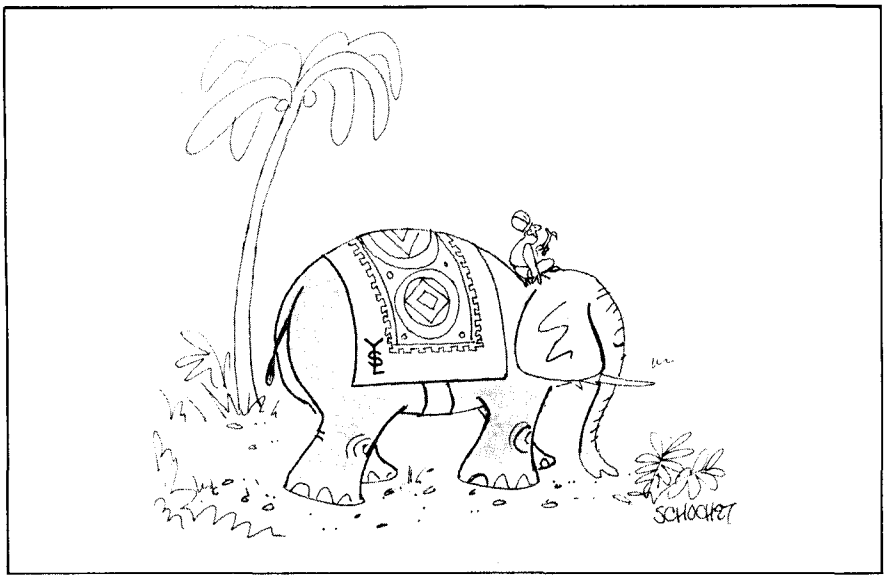
Boesman and Lena has three characters, a "colored" man and wife and a black man, and deals with them specifically but so powerfully it grows to include the lives and secrets of everyone in the audience. *Aloes* also has three characters, a white man and wife and a black man, but it not only doesn't transcend its specifics—something that one cannot demand of even a good play—it doesn't deal adequately with them.

The aloe is a spiny-leaved flowering plant indigenous to southern Africa, and Piet Bezuidenhout, an Afrikaner, collects the many species. He lives with his English wife, Gladys, outside Port Elizabeth, and from the beginning it's clear—stagily clear, alas—that something is wrong with her and between them. The entire first half of the play, moving between the backyard and the bedroom of their house, details matters of the past, data and events already known to husband and wife. Yet they keep telling each other these things so that we can learn them, and they do it in that flakily disguised way which shows that the author is embarrassedly trying to pass off this exposition as emotional and character development. At the end of the act, we know that Piet has somehow been involved in political activity, that the police raided their home and confiscated Gladys's diaries, that the shock of this raid and later interrogation unbalanced her, that she has spent some time in a mental hospital, and that Piet's considerateness is almost getting on her nerves. One other fact: Steve, a black friend, is coming to supper with his family this night to say goodbye. Steve and his family are emigrating to England. He has just served a prison term for breaking a banning order—a limitation on his movements because of his politics—and he wants to live free of harassment.

After a first act that does nothing but tell us what has already happened, we look forward to some present action. It arrives, belated and insufficient. Steve comes alone (we learn later that his child is not sick, as he had said; his wife just didn't want to come), and after some laborious reunion stuff between him and Piet—the past revisited again—the play slogs down to an accusation that it was Piet who informed the police about Steve's breach of the banning order. Piet is willing to let Steve believe it in order to "help" his friend to emigrate, but the charge evaporates. This is the sole moment of present-tense drama. Steve goes, and the white pair resume their suspended-animation marriage—until Gladys returns to the mental hospital.

Patently, Fugard wanted to create a private agony that symbolized a nation's agony, but the grinding mechanics, the saturation in neurosis, and the relatively petty climax after the long preparation defeat him. If small-scale symbolism doesn't generate implication, it grows even smaller. The elaborate politesse of British-style marital discourse, Gladys' flitterings about her new diary (which turns out to be portentously blank), the chat about supper and aloes and good times gone, all these sink the play under their light weight. The authenticity of Fugard, a man valiant and scarred in his struggles within his country, is beyond question, but this play is misconceived and unfulfilled. We see a side effect of a national tragedy, rather than an epitome of it.

Maria Tucci makes Gladys's neurosis credible but, because of the writing, the more credible, the more remote and clinical. Harris Yulin, as Piet, doesn't seem much like a bus driver only recently awakened politically, but his quietness holds the stage until James Earl Jones enters in Act Two and takes possession. Jones, who was the first American Boesman, gives a performance full of colors and meanings insinuated almost physically, conveying his differences from his friends both in inflection and movement. By his physical being and behavior, he emphasizes the gap that even affection cannot quite close. Fugard himself directed and only underscores the play's flaws and didacticism, down to the very last moment when Yulin, left alone, sits on a bench and touches an aloe—from which he and we are supposed to have learned "a lesson." (Hardiness to survive and thus ultimately to flower, I guess.) That last moment closes the heavy circle that begins with the unfortunate title. ■



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Carter Ratcliff

The Mastery of Philip Guston

They began to appear in 1968, and yet the hooded figures of the late Philip Guston's mature imagination are emblems of that dubious stretch of time we call the Seventies. It was a time of betrayal, among other things, and many felt betrayed by these blank-eyed, sinister, dopey personages. Didn't Guston already have a mature style, that brooding, subtle way with paint which had made him one of the New York School's founder-heroes? He had a place beside Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline, and now he was forsaking their exalted company to live in a realm inspired by his love of Krazy Kat and Mutt and Jeff. Guston's sudden swerve to cartoon imagery is one of the most startling episodes in American art.

It has been carefully charted in the current retrospective of the painter's career, organized by Henry Hopkins for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. After a stop at the Corcoran in Washington, D.C., the show traveled on to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago where it will close on January 11. Other stops include the Denver Art Museum (February 25 through April 26) and the Whitney Museum, New York (June 24 through September 13).

"Edge of Town" (1969), one of the earliest works in this new style, shows two of Guston's characters buzzing along in what looks like an inflatable rubber roadster. Their hoods are patched, they smoke cigars, and they share the auto's cramped space with scraps of lumber. Whatever they're up to, it's clearly no good—maybe not even for themselves. One of their most distressing features is the drapery of their hoods. It refuses to flow. As a precocious 17-year-old at the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, Guston had painted "Conspirators" (1930), which shows a trio of Ku Klux Klanners. Cloth falls, clings, and bunches up in a manner learned from the Renaissance, and from such School-of-Paris luminaries as Picasso and Fernand Léger. The eye senses flesh beneath the costume. In 1968, cloth itself is fleshy. Sometimes a familiar sooty pink drifts from Guston's nonfigurative period to tinge these draped surfaces with a mocking, cherubic blush.

Guston hints that mask is skin. Hooded features compose the only face we'll ever see. In "The Studio," also from 1969, he implicates himself in this desperate view of others. One of the hooded figures is at an easel—this is a self-portrait. Guston shows his alter ego painting yet another twin. This sets up an infinite regression in which art becomes images of images of images. With so much hidden, we must rely on our sensitivity to surfaces. Guston, of course, had been a master of brushy textures. Throughout the Fifties and early Sixties, the brilliant weave of his pink- and orange-keyed abstractions had drawn the eye to the very bristle-traces of his gesture. A grimy tinge weighed on his colors like the burden of an urban consciousness, yet even this overcast had a pearly glow to it. Now Guston was showing mindless, fleshy automatons at work.

The automatons stack spindly legs in messy heaps. They attend meetings. In bare rooms lit by a single, cartoonist's

"Nile," from 1958, when Guston was at the forefront of the New York School.

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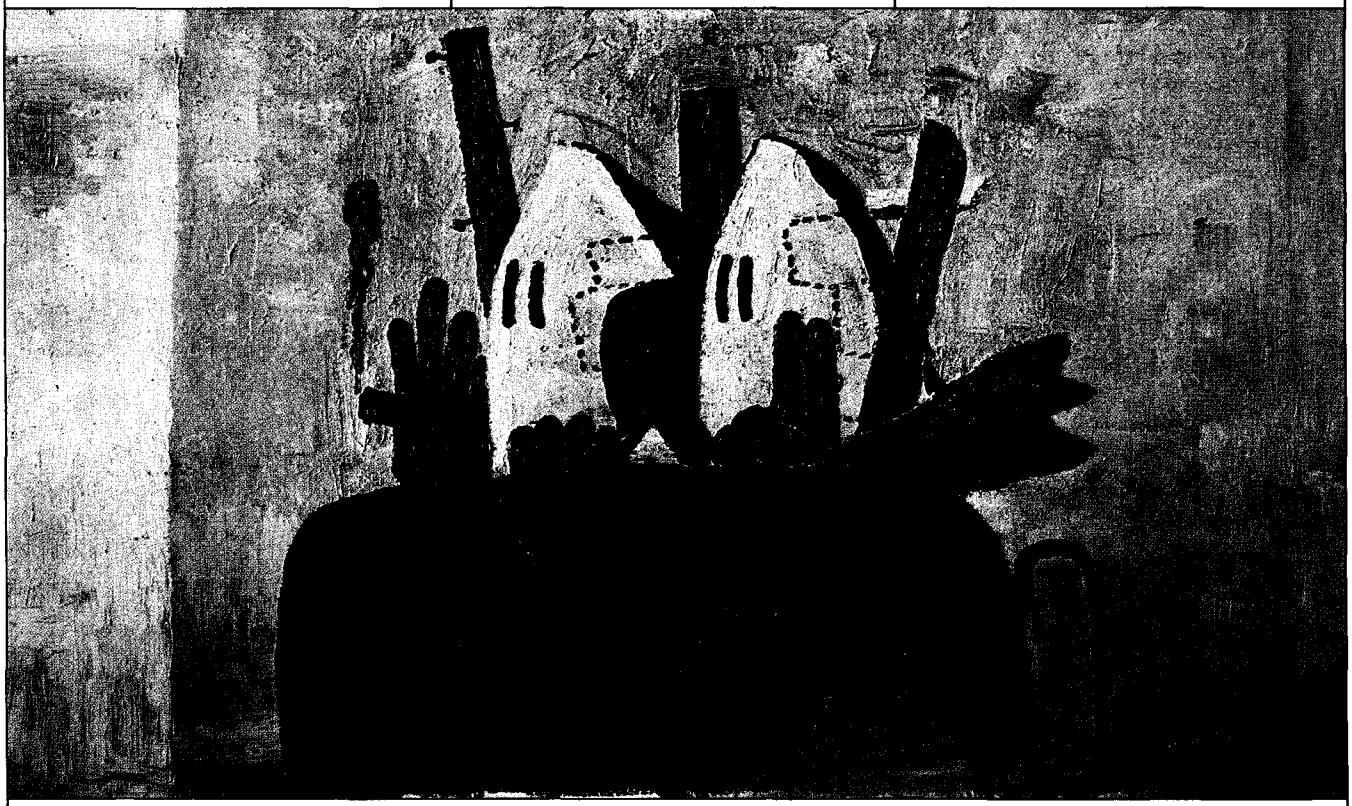
light bulb, they beat their own backs with whips (more self-portraits of the artist?). And in another bare room, one of these creatures lies on an old-fashioned brass bed, waiting wide-eyed for a city dawn to come marching past the equally wide-eyed tenements that stand outside the window. Always, they drink and smoke and clutter up the floor, the pavement, the world around them. Then, a few years into the Seventies, they disappear.

After the hooded figures come detached heads. Lacking noses and mouths, though often sporting lighted cigarettes, these objects all present a massive eye in profile—the painter's basic faculty turned omnivorous. These heads, too, are self-images, yet no unmasking has taken place. Guston has reduced himself to a bulbous, toylike thing. Sometimes it floats, like a balloon. Sometimes it teeters, forgotten, on a tabletop or in a corner. All it can do is stare, relentlessly, at the detritus of its world—bottles, heaps of legs, half-buried canvas stretchers. Like those objects, Guston's bubble-head is rendered in a knowingly clunky manner. The head is detritus, too, after all. It belongs in its world, which, Guston suggests, is our world: a place where only nuances of texture fight against the brute facts of everyday life.

By now, viewers had noticed that Guston was filling in his cloddish outlines with passages of color as delicate as any he had ever painted. The tension between his figure-making and the persistence of his abstract style had grown fierce. Nor was that tension resolved at the time of the artist's death last spring at the age of 67, just a few weeks after the opening of the retrospective. It remains a mystery so basic to these paintings that it seems to provide them with their abiding subject matter. In the last decade of his life, Guston may have been addressing himself to the unbridgeable gap between art and the world it pictures—or, in abstraction, declines to picture.

Guston could only approach this gap along the path of his own history, which veered between social concern and avant-garde detachment. In the Thirties, he had been stirred by the radical enthusiasms of the Mexican muralists, Orozco and Siqueiros. Toward the end of the decade, he joined Jackson Pollock, James Brooks, de Kooning, and others on the WPA. Under those government auspices, he proposed a number of civically minded mural designs, several of which were executed in the Utopian-realist style of the period. Then came World War II and its aftermath, when artists saw the capital of modernist painting shift from Paris to New York. In 1947, Guston stopped making any clear reference to the world we all inhabit. He had begun those experiments with abstract form that led him to the front ranks of the New York School.

Critics called him an Abstract Impressionist, a New York-style Monet, in contrast to such hardcore Abstract Expressionists as de Kooning and Kline. These labels point to formal differences without telling us what to make of them. Nor, as Guston's passionately rambling statements make clear, was he very certain about aesthetic matters. Of course he culti-



"Edge of Town," from 1969, when Guston's feverish visions of unknowable hooded characters burst through his abstractions.

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vated this uncertainty. Guston dedicated his life to the modernist plight—inspired by cultural ground shifts to innovate, the artist has no way of insuring that his audience is evolving at his speed or even, for that matter, in his direction. This anguish of disconnectedness is deepened by the spectacle of pre-modern culture in which Guston was steeped. In other times, artist, world, and audience stood in a stable relationship. Painting's meanings were clear—or were they? Guston was so thoroughly a modern that his spirit sometimes overwhelmed the longed-for serenities of quattrocento art. He could see anxiety even in Piero della Francesca's exquisite balance.

In 1966, Guston told critic Harold Rosenberg that a canvas succeeds when "it's not inert, it's active, moving, and living. And that to me seems like some kind of peculiar miracle I need to have, again and again." So he kept the paint moving over the surface, hoping that abstraction's formal energies would evoke, condense, reveal whatever lurks beneath the surface of the ordinary.

That's an awfully roundabout process. It puts painting at an excruciating distance from the rest of life. No wonder massive faces began to loom up out of Pollock's swirls of paint only four or five years after he did his first dripped canvases. De Kooning's horrific "Woman I" appeared in 1950 and took two seasons to assume her final form. It is almost as if she had to fight her way through de Kooning's lathery surfaces in order to be seen. For Guston, the pull of recognizable form was so great that he devoted much of 1966-67 to very simple drawings that can be read figuratively or not, as the eye chooses. Usually, it chooses to suspend itself between the two possibilities. Then, in 1968, Guston made a choice of his own. He went back to painting full-time, and the first of the hooded characters saw the bleak light of modernist day.

It's bleak because when the mysteries of abstraction give way, they leave us face to face with the mysteries of figuration. What, speaking of faces, are we to make of the one that rises like a sun from the blue expanses of "The Ladder" (1979)? As for the ladder and the sapling-like legs that climb it, they seem to offer an allegory of ascent—but to which heights? To those upper reaches of art where one senses the limits of allegory, perhaps. Guston worked doggedly and brilliantly to cure us of our addiction to pat answers. Along the way, he built a new region—Gustonland—onto figuration's territory. And the surfaces of his paintings, with their freighted delicacy, kept getting richer. There's a renewable shock, hence an unending puzzle, in the sight of Guston's deliberately dumb cartoon style getting along so well with the extraordinary refinement of his paint handling. Throughout the Seventies, young artists left the high road of abstraction in droves. Startling new images of the human face and body crowded the decade. Life's most ordinary artifacts, from teapots to teddy bears, took on new shapes and auras. For all their strangeness, few of these figurative innovations were completely unprecedented. As often as not, they had been foreshadowed in the feverish light of Philip Gustonland. ■

Carter Ratcliff is an art critic and poet.

"Green Sea" (1976). Legs, heads, bottles, shoes—for Guston, all these had become the detritus of everyday life.

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FILM

Judith Crist

A Gem From Australia

That old banality, "one man's loss is another man's gain," has been translated into a double bonus for moviegoers, what with the "loss" involving a $36-million epic that they *won't* be seeing and the "gain," a major film that they will.

The epic is, of course, Michael Cimino's **Heaven's Gate**, a 219-minutes-plus-intermission story of the Johnson County range wars of 1892 that was more than two years in the making. Finally, it was rushed from editing room and laboratory to a critics' screening on the eve of its New York opening on November 19. In the face of devastatingly negative reviews, Cimino, an Oscar-winner in 1978 for *The Deer Hunter*, asked that the film be withdrawn so that he could "edit" it. Presumably it will be cut by at least an hour before being re-released, as announced, "during the first half of 1981." After a week and a total of 24 showings—including two critics' showings and a preview in Toronto—the film was taken out of circulation. No loss from the consumer standpoint, I assure you.

Breaker Morant, one of the finest of the fine films to come from Australia in recent years, had been scheduled to follow *Heaven's Gate* at the New York theater where the Cimino film was expected to complete its initial engagement by February or March. But thanks to that film's withdrawal—"demise" would be a bit premature—and after a few weeks' delay, this new movie is ours to revel in.

Edward Woodward as Breaker Morant surveys the South African veldt.

And revel one can in this exquisitely filmed, beautifully directed (by Bruce Beresford), and strikingly performed drama, focused on one of Australia's more controversial folk heroes. Harry Morant, nicknamed "The Breaker" for his way with horses, was an Englishman who went to Australia, establishing himself as a horsebreaker, a minor bush balladist, and sometime journalist. He volunteered to fight in the Boer War (a commission could result in a glorious return to his estranged family in England) and served with other Australians in a specially trained militia used to combat the guerrilla tactics of the Boers in South Africa.

In 1901, the group's captain is killed in ambush and mutilated. Morant, his close friend and second in command, pursues the Boers, attacks their camp and has a captive shot. Other prisoners are shot, and a German missionary is found slain. Morant and two other lieutenants, Handcock and Witten, are charged before a court martial with killing the prisoners and the missionary.

What emerges goes far beyond the confines of a thrilling courtroom drama to touch not only upon the uses to which imperialism puts its subjects but also, and more important, upon the universal—perhaps eternal—question of "following orders." There are shades of Stanley Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* in the carefully structured procedures that lead to a pre-ordained verdict. The men are scapegoats: "They have to apologize for their bloody war," Morant observes. But the prisoners were killed—and the questions raised in our time at Nuremberg and My Lai confront the turn-of-the-century judges. Once again we consider men who were "good fighters in a bad war," in which "a half-million men [were] fighting a few thousand farmers". Can soldiers at war be judged by civilian standards? "The tragedy of war," the defense counsel notes, "is that horrors are committed by normal men in abnormal situations." And personal tragedy lies within the politics of Empire-building, as "colonials" on the path to commonwealth status face the establishment and appeasement is necessary in a war that is ending.

Edward Woodward is memorable

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Jake La Motta (Robert De Niro) wins the middleweight championship in Scorsese's disappointing *Raging Bull*.

as Morant, intelligent, impassioned in vengeance, fatalistic in retrospect. Bryan Brown, as the soldierly, uneducated Handcock, and Lewis Fitz-Gerald, as Witton, trained to give all for Queen and Country, are excellent, as is Jack Thompson as the country solicitor ordered by Lord Kitchener to defend the three. Beresford (whose earlier film was *The Getting of Wisdom*) has brought a penetrating sense of period and place to the screen: The terrain and expanse of the South African veldt are as overwhelming as the power of Empire. The screenplay, on which Beresford collaborated, was based on a Kenneth Ross stageplay—but the film, though only 106 minutes long, expands it to near-epic status.

Martin Scorsese did not write **Raging Bull** (the screenplay is by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin), but it is for him a triumphant exercise of style: tough, street-wise, and brutal. For the fourth time he is working with the gifted Robert De Niro, who here becomes the embodiment of Jake La Motta, the middleweight prizefighter who entitled his autobiography *Raging Bull*.

We are, of course, past the point of thinking that every boxer is a violinist or humanist manque, but the grossness, the swinishness, and the sadism of Jake La Motta in and out of the ring have limited entertainment value. Granted that De Niro fulfills the moronic paranoia, the gutter-morality, and even the physical repulsiveness of his role (gaining 50 pounds to be the bulgy boxer in retirement); granted that Scorsese's view of ring action and perceptions of time, place, and milieu are nothing short of brilliant; but the enigma of LaMotta remains and we are unlightened. His post-prison calm and glimmerings of intelligence (he hit the nightclub circuit in the Sixties) are sudden and as inexplicable as his initial bestiality. There is small point to the film beyond providing a showcase for the great gifts of De Niro and Scorsese's special talents. Are these enough?

Scorsese's film is, fittingly for its period and subject, in black-and-white, with the color of home movies and snapshots flashed effectively as La Motta's story moves into the Fifties. Ingmar Bergman's **From the Life of the Marionettes** is also in black-and-white, with only the opening and closing sequences in color, both involving a man's murder of a prostitute in a brothel. It is Bergman's second film made in Munich (the first was *The Serpent's Egg* in 1977), this time with a German cast. It is his coldest and most despairing film.

The body of the work is devoted to an investigation of the murder, with interviews, and monologues, and flashbacks to explore its anatomy. We hear from the sleazy psychiatrist with whom the murderer and his wife were involved, his mother, and his wife and her business associate, and from them there emerges a chilling pantomime of lovelessness, of empty-hearted men and women seeking fleeting releases, self-satisfactions, and social acceptance. We have walked this path with Bergman before but seldom with such lack of involvement. The psychiatrist's pat analysis is too pat—but Bergman stays not for any answer. The manipulator is, invariably, more interesting than the marionette—but he fails to appear.

The all-German cast is very good—Walter Schmidlinger stands out as the wife's homosexual business partner (she's a couturiere, of course)—and Sven Nykvist's cinematography provides a supplemental cool to the script, with exquisite white dream sequences against the gray realities of ordinary life and the vivid colors of the murder. But beyond the melodrama there is the tedium of unmitigated and quiet desperation. ■

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Irving Kolodin

An Overgrown Grove

Ever since the first Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* attained completion in four volumes (1890), through the appearance of the fifth edition in nine volumes (1954), it has been held in high esteem through the English-speaking world as the most accessible bridge between the landlocked music lover and the offshore sources of information he yearns to invade and conquer.

Now, however, all but 3 percent of that fifth edition (which subsequently appeared in a sturdily bound paperback version) has been banished. In its place is what is called *The New Grove Dictionary*, in 20 volumes and 18,000,000 words, created at considerable expense by Macmillan Publishers Ltd. of England (not to be confused with the Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. of this country). In effect, all those who have, over a 25-year lapse, been looking forward to a sixth edition in keeping with its predecessors, have been set aside in favor of the specialist rather than the general reader.

In place of the old Grove is a veritable forest of informational content, an assemblage of verbal and pictorial content that would grace any institutional library, musical or academic. Its intelligently planned lengthy articles are, in many instances, of a breadth and specificity that outdo any prior publication in English. Of excelling quality are the supporting work lists of composers and the bibliographies pertaining to their life accomplishments.

Sir George Grove (1820-1900) compiled the first "Grove's."

As an instance of fertility both in life and art, Volume I offers, beginning on page 776 and extending through page 877, a carefully compiled, condensed book on the Bachs. The first two facing pages set out, in well-designed abundance, a family tree of which Veit Bach, at the left, was the progenitor and Johann Philipp, who died in 1846, was the 85th and last, at the right. Johann Sebastian, born in 1685, was the 24th. Not only his immense output but the relatively large literature of his famous sons are enumerated in startling totality at the proper chronological points.

Many weeks' perusal of the volumes manifests a similar, insistent thoroughness of treatment of composers of scholarly, rather than popular, importance. If you are interested in Gilles de Bins Binchois of the 15th century, you'll find a dozen pages on him. If, however, you are interested in the great, beloved Spanish composer Isaac Albeniz, you'll have to look somewhere else for embracing discussion. Volume I gives him less than two pages, including a picture. The history of notation gets nearly 100 pages, and the graphic material (totaling nearly 150 examples) is an education in itself. So too are the divisions dealing with instruments and instrument making, ethnomusicology, places and institutions, etc.

Inevitably, there have been oversights by those who carried out the grand plan of editor Stanley Sadie (a member of the music staff of the London *Times* and editor of the long-established *Musical Times* of England). Among the 22,500 articles, spread over the 20 volumes, I read with interest and stimulation a lengthy piece on Gustav Mahler's life and works by Paul Banks. Seeking further information on a man capable of so fine a survey, I looked at an appropriate place in Volume II for his biography. Nothing there.

I also note, for example, a reference to the late Mischa Elman as an "American violinist of Russian birth." Was there a day in his 76 years when he was anything but a Russian violinist? Or did the mere fact of American citizenship change his bow arm, how he used it, and what came out of the

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MUSIC

instrument on which he performed?

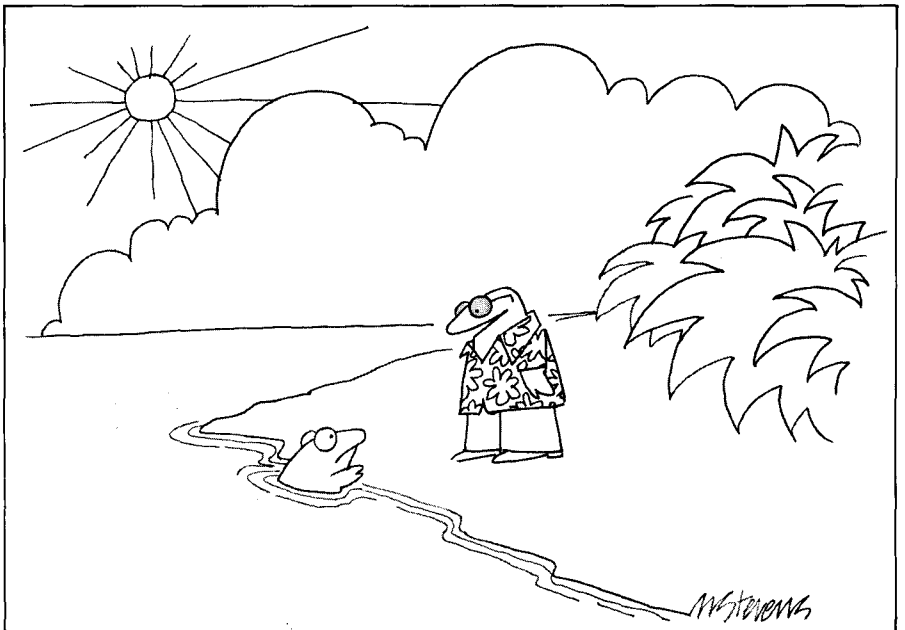
In one range of the shorter material, responsibility cannot be challenged. That is the assignment of operatic biographical matter to Desmond Shawe-Taylor, who not long ago retired as music critic of the *Sunday Times* of London, and to Harold Rosenthal, editor of *Opera* magazine of the same city. Through the 20 volumes, almost every item, regardless of length or brevity, bears the name of the contributor (rather than merely initials, as in prior Grove usage). In the instance of the well-known Italian opera mezzo Fedora Barbieri, her biography of approximately 20 lines bears the names of both Shawe-Taylor and Rosenthal.

The prevailing emphasis on scholarship extends to the treatment of jazz, of which there is an extended discussion by Max Harrison (Volume 9) but no biography of Harrison in the earlier volume. Lest it be assumed that contributors are rigorously excluded from the Dictionary, I note that a 14-page essay on the 17th-century composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier by H. Wiley Hitchcock is illuminated by a biography of Hitchcock in Volume 8. There is in Volume 20 a list of contributors that identifies their place of residence but nothing more.

Reference to individual jazz performers in the alphabetical sequence frequently include, as in the instances of Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman, notational illustration of typical improvisatory style. In the discussion of Goodman, however, I see no reference to the outstanding occasion of his public life, the Carnegie Hall concert of January 16, 1938.

In one brochure circulated by Macmillan on prior editions of Grove, the fifth edition is deprecated as "still essentially aimed at the amateur." The presumption that such interest has been ruled out of *The New Grove* would disqualify, among a world of others, Sir George Grove himself. He was by training a civil engineer, but by mature decision and heartfelt commitment, a music lover whose work enriched millions. Indeed, on page 754 of Volume 7, a pupil of Grove is quoted as saying: "He taught one to think of him as pre-eminently an *amateur*."

Such being the case, why dub 20 volumes, including but a minor fraction of anything possibly known to him, as *The New Grove*? Perhaps to give a cachet of identity to a product for which institutions are now required to pay $1,900 (plus $25 for shipping). Individuals may utilize an installment plan on payment of $190 per month for 10 months, with two volumes delivered for each settlement. ■



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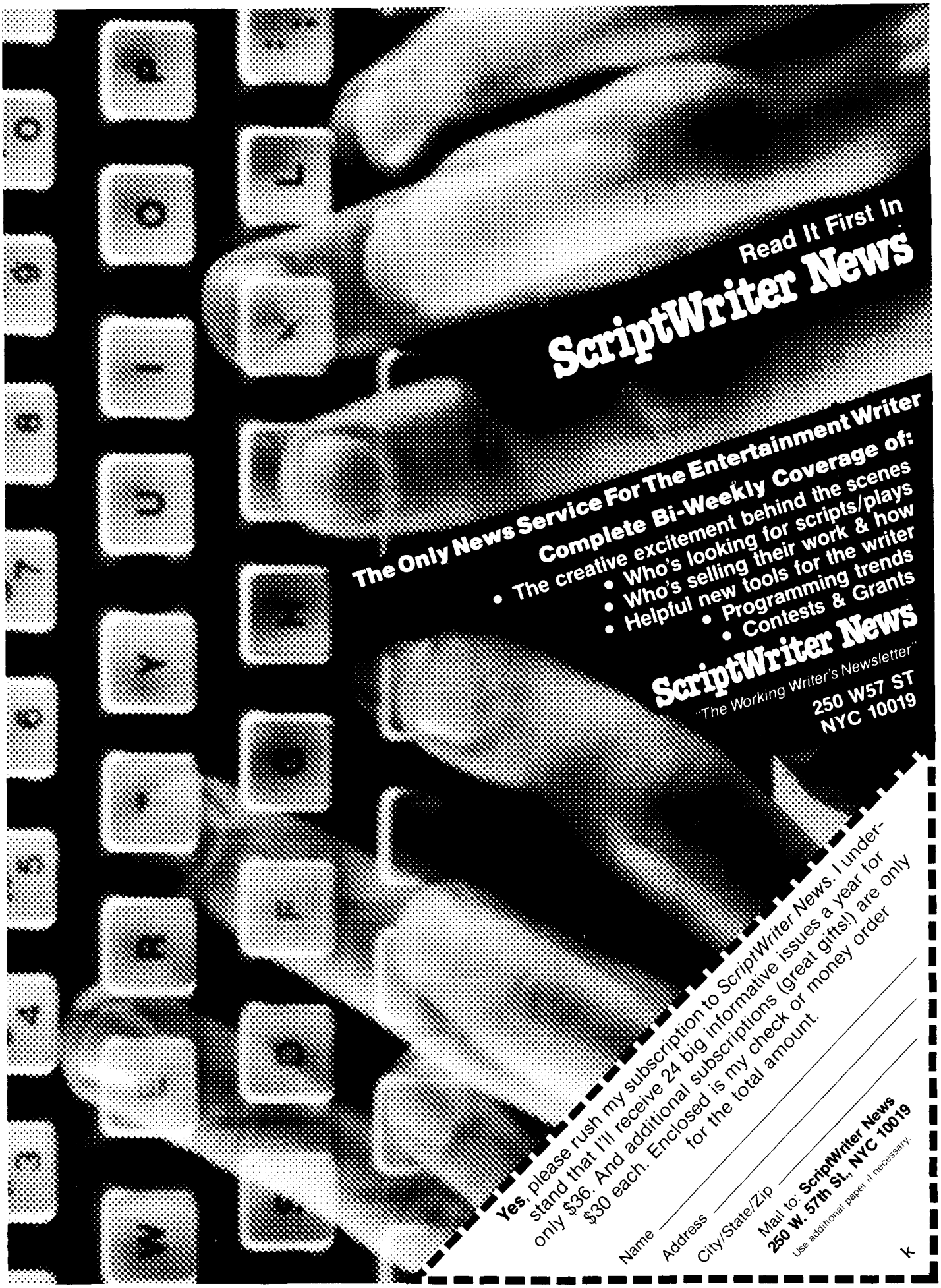
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DANCE

Walter Terry

An Alonso Gala

Alicia Alonso is a member of a rare species—prima ballerina *assoluta*—one of only three or four that are on view today. It was my honor to be her guest at the Seventh International Ballet Festival held under her auspices, and those of the Cuban government, in Havana last fall.

Miss Alonso, just turned 59, found a new Albrecht for her Giselle in the USSR's Vladimir Vasiliev, very probably Russia's finest male dancer. Alonso has danced the title role in *Giselle* for 37 years, and the list of her distinguished partners includes England's Anton Dolin,who first taught her the ballet in his own staging of the classic for the American Ballet Theatre. Today, despite the obvious gap in her own age and that of the teenage Giselle, Alonso, in this Havana performance, accomplished what only a handful of great dancers and actresses have done, and that is to reveal the inner radiance and emotional urgencies of youth through the clear perspective of maturity and the ecstasy of remembrance. Dolin, now 76, was present to watch her performance with Vasiliev. His rapturous verdict? "Sheer magic."

Alonso with Vasiliev in *Giselle*.

I doubt that it occurred to any one in the cheering audience to say of Alonso, "Not bad for a Cuban Communist." For although she is that, to her public she is so much more. In her person, talents, and indomitable spirit Miss Alonso embodies the transcendent quality of the arts over the narrow and transient arena of politics. To her, these International Ballet Festivals are a celebration of the "oneness" of the family of dance.

In recent years, petulant politicians have not stood in the way of Alonso's appearances in the U.S.—previously she was barred for almost 15 years—nor of Americans participating in the International Ballet Festivals in Havana. Now, at the 1980 festival held late last year, it was exciting to see the One World of Dance back together again so joyfully.

Dancers and choreographers, musicians and critics, dance photographers and ballet documentarians came from the United States and the Soviet Union, from socialist Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Denmark, from Venezuela, Mexico, Great Britain, and indeed from around the world.

The Americans, Eleanor D'Antuono, veteran ballerina of the ABT, and Paul Russell, the foremost black classical dancer of today, performed with Cuban partners to thunderous applause from the audience. When the California-born Yoko Ichino and the Cuban Fernando Jhones "knocked 'em dead," to put it in show-biz terms, with *Le Corsaire*, it was delightful to recall their fast-paced rehearsal of the preceding day. Ichino could speak only English; Jhones, only Spanish. But they could both speak through the language of ballet, through the easy eloquence of movement. Since their versions of the old Marius Petipa classic varied in several places—it would have been perilous if she had leapt into his arms only to discover too late that he was elsewhere on stage!—they had to reconcile their differences. This they did easily with a gesture here, a bit of pantomime there, many tactile touches on arms, chests, thighs, shoulders, plus a great deal of the mysterious (to the outsider) sign-language whereby dancers can literally dance whole ballets with their hands and fingers.

Occasionally, of course, the spirit of international exchange through dance is stifled by socialist bureaucracy and fears of defections. Soviet ballet, for example, despite the considerable talents of the Bolshoi's Grigorovich, is patently 50 years behind the times because the country's young choreographers are not permitted to work and study extensively outside the Soviet bloc. Even Cuba, despite Alonso's remarkable example of artistic freedom and courage, has not allowed its most gifted choreographers, among them Alberto Mendez, to work, observe, and learn in the richly creative atmosphere of North America.

But such considerations only slightly marred this artistically stirring and warmly human Seventh International Ballet Festival. Throughout, the indefatigable Alonso devoted herself, as she has done since the beginning of her illustrious career, to the care and well-being of her extended family—the dancers of the world. ■

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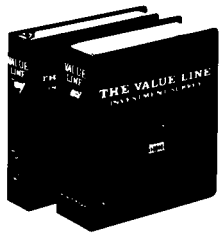

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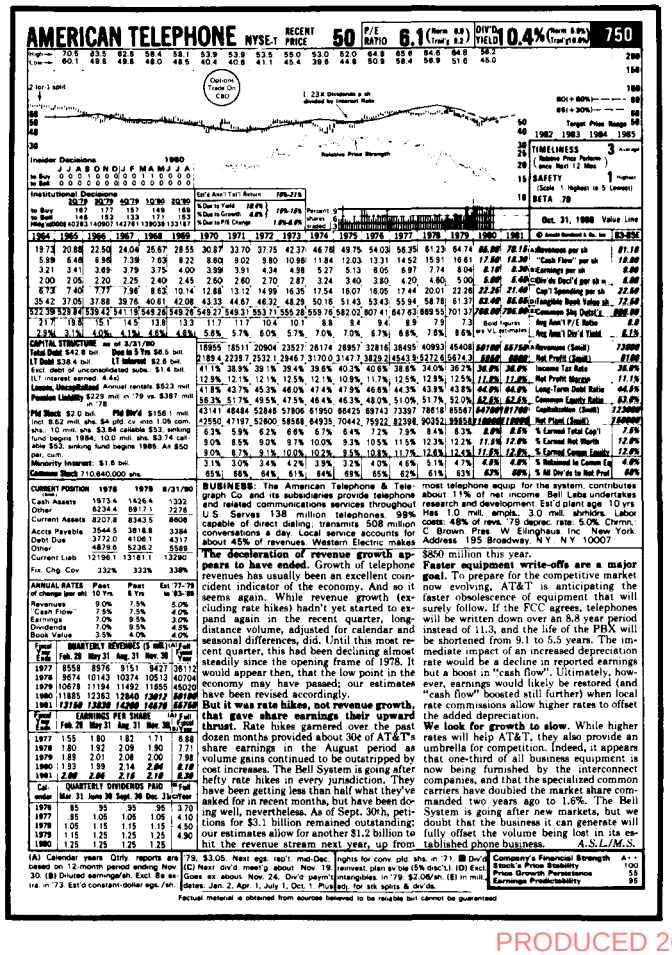
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The deceleration of revenue growth appears to have ended. Growth in telephone revenues has usually been an excellent coincident indicator of the economy. And so it seems again. While revenue growth (excluding rate hikes) hadn't yet started to expand again in the recent quarter, long-distance volume, adjusted for calendar and seasonal differences, did. Until this most recent quarter, this had been declining almost steadily since the opening frame of 1978. It would appear then, that the low point in the economy may have passed; our estimates have been revised accordingly.

But it was rate hikes, not revenue growth, that gave share earnings their upward thrust. Rate hikes garnered over the past dozen months provided about 30¢ of AT&T's share earnings in the August period as volume gains continued to be outstripped by cost increases. The Bell System is going after hefty rate hikes in every jurisdiction. They have been getting less than half what they've asked for in recent months, but have been doing well, nevertheless. As of Sept. 30th, petitions for $3.1 billion remained outstanding; our estimates allow for another $1.2 billion to hit the revenue stream next year, up from $850 million this year.

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We look for growth to slow. While higher rates will help AT&T, they also provide an umbrella for competition. Indeed, it appears that one-third of all business equipment is now being furnished by the interconnect companies, and that the specialized common carriers have doubled the market share commanded two years ago to 1.6%. The Bell System is going after new markets, but we doubt that the business it can generate will fully offset the volume being lost in its established phone business. *A.S.L./M.S.*

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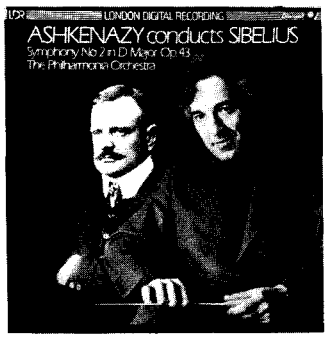
RECORDS

Stephen Wadsworth

What Is Digital?

They gave you the horn. Then they gave you 78s, LPs, and stereophonic sound. Quad came and went. Now there's digital, the latest step—though far from the last—in the ongoing purification of the recording process. With computer technology, recording engineers can eliminate some of the distortion inherent in the old analog system and produce records much more faithful to the original sound source, with deeper deeps, brighter brights, louder louds, and softer softs.

Sound is variations in air pressure. During recording, disc manufacture, and home reproduction, these variations are converted and reconverted numerous times—from electrical signals in the mike to magnetic patterns on the tape to positions in the record groove, eventually back to air-pressure variations in your listening room. Every conversion compromises the fidelity of the final reproduction.



Analog recording makes a comparatively rough model of the original sound by turning it into magnetic impulses (analogous to the original) which, because of the nature of the process, are vulnerable to imperfections. Digital recording *describes* the original sound in greater detail by encoding it into a vast procession of numbers (digits) representing tiny pulses, the component elements of the sound. It should be noted, however, that the digital releases on the market now are not digital discs; they are performances digitally recorded and released in the analog format.

Vanguard's series of digital/analog comparison discs allows listeners to evaluate a single performance recorded by both methods. Johannes Somary's spirited but unpolished run-through of Haydn's Symphony No. 100, with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, sounds slightly more natural and free on side one (digital) than on side two (analog). But I'd still go for Leonard Bernstein's old analog version (Columbia) or Neville Marriner's (Philips). I prefer a snappier performance to an "improved" sound that is only arguably better than Philips's high-quality analog results.

Similarly, Deutsche Grammophon's new analog disc of Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole*, with Carlo Maria Giulini leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, is a better recording of the work than RCA's digital version with Eduardo Mata and the Dallas Symphony. Mata is a strongly appealing conductor, and his intense performance is caught with admirable clarity by RCA, but, as Giulini says of *Rapsodie*, "too much intensity is fatal." Giulini gets exquisite shape and shimmer from his players, and DG's analog sound is only slightly fuzzy at climaxes. On RCA's flip side, Mata does brilliantly with Ravel's *Bolero*—a perfect display piece for digital's strengths, from hushed beginning to exhilarating noisy end.

Comparing two digital *Boleros*, RCA's with Mata and Telarc's with Leonard Slatkin conducting the St. Louis Orchestra, proves Mata the musical victor and Telarc the digital victor. In fact, if there were such a thing as a digital cake, Telarc would take it. For brilliance, presence, and spaciousness, and for clean surfaces, which seem as rare on digital records as on analog ones, Telarc's new recording of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* scores high. It never seems to be the recorded sound of the Cleveland Orchestra (under Lorin Maazel) that we hear, it's more like the orchestra itself.

Another convincing music-technology balance is struck on London's new digital release of Sibelius's Symphony No. 2, an arrestingly beautiful performance. The Philharmonia Orchestra plays richly for Vladimir Ashkenazy, who brings the same honesty and classical line to conducting this irresistible work as he does to playing a Mozart piano sonata. Fine digital sound is, in this case, just another reason to buy a good record. So are the liner notes, which explain digital recording more clearly than anything else I've read.

There's still no such thing as a perfect record. There will always be quality-control problems—until, perhaps, all stages of recording, disc manufacture, and home reproductions are digital. And that's no dim possibility, because the digital idea is an irreversible fact of our scientific lives. For now, however, digital doesn't necessarily mean better (though it does mean more expensive, with list prices up to $20 per disc). In any case, music, not technology, will always be the point of records. ■

Stephen Wadsworth, former managing editor of *Opera News*, contributes articles to many musical publications here and abroad.

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SR Competition No. 16

It completely escaped what for want of a better word we like to call our mind that this competition passed its first anniversary some little while back and is now well into a second year of uncalled-for silliness. Since the day when our trembling fingers tore open that first envelope, our respect for our contestants has grown by quantum leaps, whatever that means. But there must be a limit to excellence. We have therefore decided to set the *ultimate competition*. So: send us your version of an *SR* competition, complete with intro (see above), rules (see here), and prizes (see below). The three winners will receive our usual munificent $25, and if we should actually *use* one of the competitions in a subsequent issue, the author will be paid at contributors' rates. Have fun.

Entries for Competition No. 16 must be received by February 6 and the winners will be announced in the April issue. Send submissions to *SR* Competition No. 16, *Saturday Review*, 150 East 58 Street, New York, N.Y. 10155. All entries become the property of *SR*.

Winners of No. 13

We asked you to invent the opening line of a novel and supply the name of the book and author. Before getting to the pleasant part of this report, we must ask those of you who faint at the sight of violence to turn aside. Will the contestant who thought we would not recognize "I shall soon be quite dead at last in spite of all" as the *real* first sentence of Beckett's *Malone Dies* come to the desk and hold out his palms this instant. Yes, you.

There. Otherwise, reading the entries was enormous fun. We are glad to see that "the duchess," who enjoys a certain impolite fame among connoisseurs of opening lines, is still kicking, throbbing, panting, and manifesting other signs of a generally bawdy life. A remarkable number of hilarious entries were unprintable in this family journal. Is the opening line now in competition with the limerick as a vehicle for ribald wit? We have never seen it, but there must be some classical example involving an accident with a washing machine, since in three separate entries the three parts of the human anatomy least mentioned in these pages got caught in the wringer. Right. Those three.

As proof that our efforts are read by persons of tender years we need go no further than the numerous pooled entries that arrive from high school English classes. The first prize, in fact, goes to Scott Franzen (age unknown) of Ms. Rosalie Fisher's creative-writing class in the St. Joseph-Ogden High School, St. Joseph, Illinois. Never in living memory has the word "unfavorable" been so deftly used. This is the opening of Kari Crab's *The Crab Creature*:

> The creature arose out of the frantic sea with a furious rage clutching the flushed-faced girl with his evil paws, and with great intensity pulled her beneath the unfavorable waters.

Second prize to Elizabeth J. Seaton of Springfield, Oregon, who must be one of the numerous devotees of our colleague Middleton. This is the opening of *The Hospitaled Fury*, by Verba Liza Noune:

> She medicined the patient, attared the room, and healthized the situation, or so she thought.

Third prize to Dr. J. Edwin Culbertson of Monroe, Louisiana, who wins not so much for the entry itself as for the story behind it. This is how Chapter I of *Here's to Him*, by Edwin Culbertson, starts:

> When my great grandfather, Dr. E. Poe Harriss, married his Cherokee Indian wife she was a Wolfe; so was grandpa and remained one until he died in 1896.

Fact is, this is the actual beginning of a book Dr. Culbertson is writing about his ancestor, who sounds like a darling man. His Uncle McGuffy (*the* McGuffy) brought him up to be a preacher, but he found relief from his own hell-fire sermons by "private communion behind the church" with the prettier members of his flock. McGuffy sent him to medical school. Dr. Harriss married three times, "once for love and twice for money and tribal membership." His blond hair reached his waist, he snorted coke all his life, once shot a cardsharp and, undressing him to treat the wound, found his clothes full of aces and kings. Over his finally dead body his last wife said, "Well for once I know where he'll be tonight and that he'll be alone!" We can't wait for the book.

Puzzles

Wit Twister No. 173

Edited by Arther Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash with a blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

As — — — — — of bright coral inward turn—
As greying — — — — — within still hotly burn—
So, timid hearts may glow when — — — — — grown thin,
Yet hide that — — — — — of autumn love within.
With self-made — — — — —, they seal their eyes from bliss
And — — — — — lips shut, though longing still to kiss.

A.S.

Literary Crypt No. 161

MYTH-GUMBLAYER UM PLEY TUNYTR WL WINY STIBY ... UX WOY HUBWULX BITTYG HUB-WULX WOIX UX WOY HUBWULX BITTYG ICWLFULVEISOR.

QYMMIPRX ZYMW

Answers next issue

December Answers

Solution to Wit Twister No. 172

Vera, aver, rave

Solution to Literary Crypt No. 160

This will never be a civilized country until we spend more money for books than we do for chewing gum.

Elbert Hubbard

Middleton Double-Crostic No. 202

(BARBARA) TUCHMAN:
MANKIND'S BETTER MOMENTS

In human activity the invention of the ball may be said to rank with the invention of the wheel. Imagine America without baseball, Europe without soccer, England without cricket, and Italians without boccie, China without Ping Pong and tennis for no one.

From the *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1980

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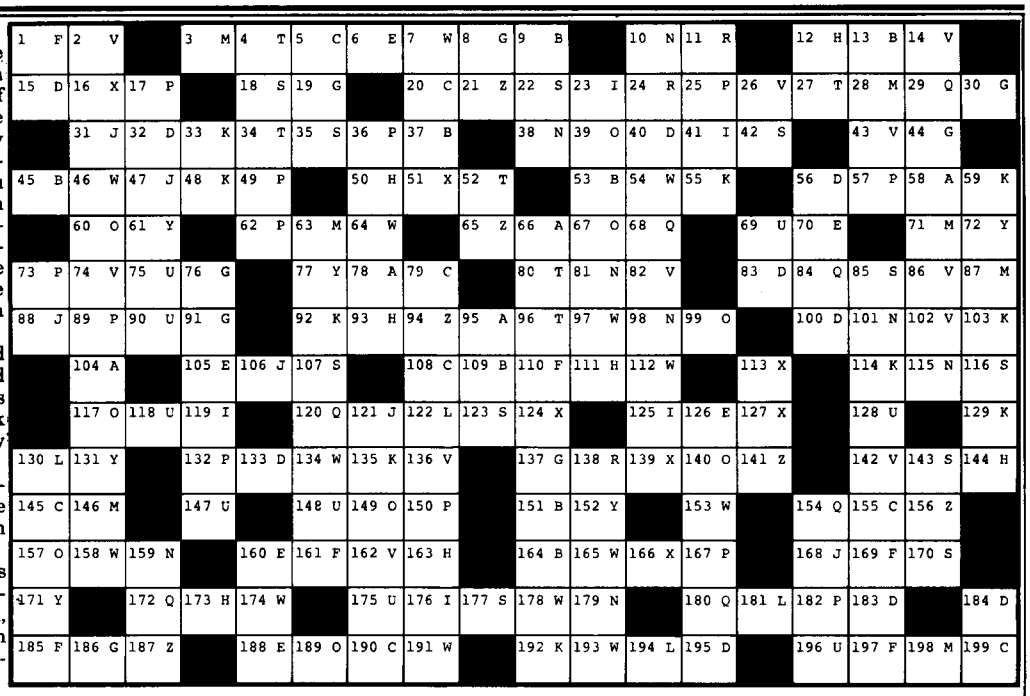
Instructions:
If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle. Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper-right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.
The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.
The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.
You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.



Middleton Double-Crostic No. 203

CLUES	WORDS
A. Irish poet; British sculptor; American boxer	58 66 78 95 104
B. Purple or violet quartz, February's birthstone	109 151 164 9 13 37 45 53
C. Forsake, forswear, quit, put aside voluntarily	79 108 145 155 190 199 5 20
D. Being prepared or developed (3 wds.)	40 56 83 133 183 15 32 100 184 195
E. County, central Republic of Ireland	6 70 105 126 160 188
F. Stately dance dating from the 16th century	197 1 110 161 169 185
G. Development or growth from within (biol.)	186 8 30 44 76 91 19 137
H. One of two or more species of the same element having the same atomic number but differing in atomic mass	144 163 173 12 50 93 111
I. Vex, harass; comb or card, as wool	119 125 176 23 41
J. Roman lyric poet and satirist (65 B.C.–8 B.C.)	88 106 121 168 31 47
K. Burst into bloom	59 114 129 48 92 135 192 103 33 55
L. Glide along at a height; fly upward	122 130 181 194
M. "Where the pictures for ___ atone" (2 wds.; Pope, "The Dunciad")	28 63 71 87 3 146 198
N. Pitch that curves away from the batter	10 101 159 179 81 98 115 38
O. 1912 Jerome-Monaco song (3 wds.)	39 60 117 140 189 67 99 149 157
P. Chicken heart, lily liver, cold feet (2 wds.)	17 25 49 73 89 132 167 62 150 36 57 182
Q. Felony; umbrage	120 154 172 29 68 180 84
R. Dandy, macaroni	11 138 24
S. Anti-crime phrase (3 wds)	85 22 177 18 35 42 143 116 170 123 107
T. Storm, charge	96 52 80 27 4 34
U. On the level, for real (2 wds.)	75 69 148 196 118 128 147 90 175
V. American actress ("Laura," "The Razor's Edge;" full name)	142 86 102 136 43 74 14 26 2 82 162
W. King Arthur's father (full name)	7 97 54 134 191 46 64 112 178 174 193 165 158 153
X. Georgia city noted for golf tournaments	16 51 166 139 124 127 113
Y. Old fellow, esp. an elderly rustic	171 72 61 77 152 131
Z. Connoisseur, master	94 21 187 141 156 65

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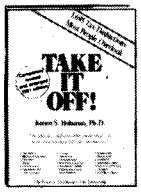

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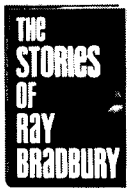

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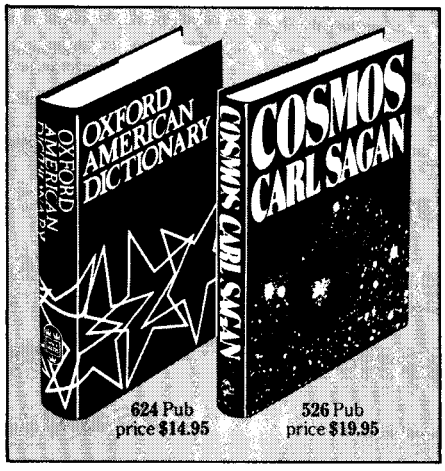

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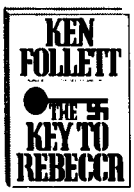

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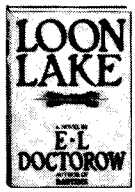

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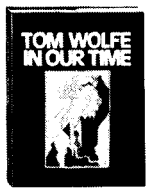

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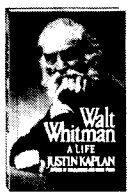

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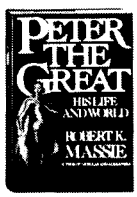

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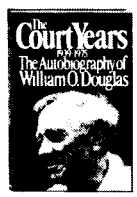

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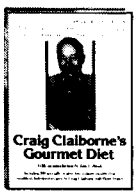

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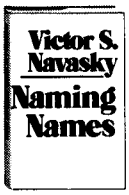

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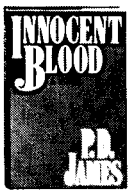

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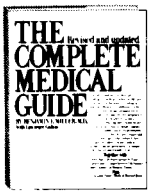

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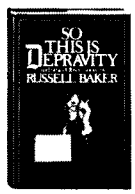

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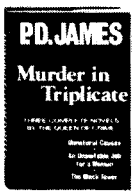

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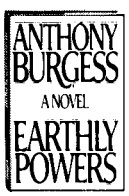

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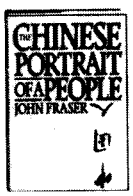

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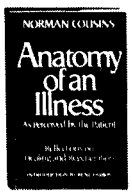

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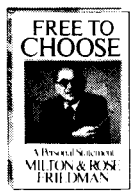

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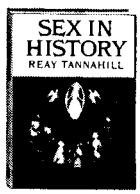

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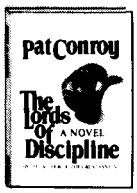

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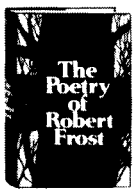

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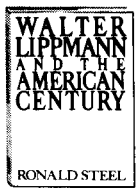

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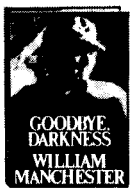

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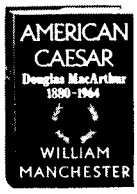

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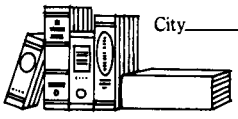

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SR RECOMMENDS

Books

Fiction

Earthly Powers, by Anthony Burgess (Simon & Schuster, 448 pp., $15.95). While novelist Kenneth Marchal Toomey makes a religion of his art, Cardinal Campanati is intriguing at the Vatican, making an art of his religion. Each seeks the glory of an earthly crown, and in their separate ways they fail as men by succeeding in their art. Huge, symmetrical, very funny, and filled with the ideas and obsessions Burgess has hinted at in his other writing, *Earthly Powers* is a novel of Tolstoyan proportion.

The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 576 pp., $14.95). With the release of this collection of every story she has ever published, Eudora Welty takes her rightful place in the classic company of Chekhov, Maupassant, and Poe. She is one of the few Southern writers who are not moralists. She does not guide the reader to think as she does; there is no "right," no "wrong," only that rare thing called compassion, sensuously evoked.

Horn of Africa, by Philip Caputo (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 491 pp., $12.95). The length to which three men will go when "free to exceed the bounds of acceptable human conduct" is the subject of Philip Caputo's first novel. His intuitive grasp of human motivation, flair for the theatrical, and descriptive acuity prod us into a startling reevaluation of man stripped of personal illusions and denied civilization's ethical restraints.

Nonfiction

Lectures on Literature, Vladimir Nabokov, edited by Fredson Bowers (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 344 pp., $19.95). The delightful bias behind this collection of teaching lectures is that "great novels are great fairy tales." Nabokov's celebrated cantankerousness is much in evidence here, but the emphasis is on the magic and rapture of words, a theme irresistibly reinforced by the dazzle of Nabokov's own style.

The Art of Maurice Sendak, by by Selma G. Lanes (Harry N. Abrams, 278 pp., $40). Eating and the fear of being eaten have long been the preoccupations of children—and of illustrator Maurice Sendak, who has created those pudgy wild beasts, with their bulging yellow eyes and teeth-lined smiles, to ward off the demons of his childhood. Sendak's rage at being sent to bed without supper as a child gave birth to the angry, vindictive little boy in his controversial triumph *Where the Wild Things Are*, his first and still most popular picture book. Selma G. Lanes traces Sendak's colorful career with pictures in a luscious volume designed to incite the imagination of any fearful adult.

A Biography of Alice James, by Jean Strouse (Houghton Mifflin, 384 pp., $15). Idealization and underestimation, the companionable twins, ruled the view of women in the James household. Alice didn't have the strength to leave home, marry, and raise children, and the men she wanted to please were her father and two oldest brothers, William and Henry. As a result, she spent her life between a pedestal and a sick bed. Jean Strouse brings us a subtle and compelling biography of the talented invalid who was Alice James.

Corridors of Time: 1,700,000,000 Years of Earth at the Grand Canyon, by Ron Redfern (Times Books, 198 pp., $55). It is not merely the origin of the Grand Canyon that Ron Redfern attempts to discover in this book, but the origins of the earth and of life. Using the canyon as its constant focus, the text traces the history of the earth from the first whirl of gaseous matter to the present. As a photographer, Redfern meets the spectaular head-on; his panoramas see everything the eye sees and all but surround the viewer. A marvelous evocation, perhaps the best ever, of the Grand Canyon.

Walt Whitman: A Life, by Justin Kaplan (Simon & Schuster, 416 pp., $12.95). In this delicate, calm, and painstaking biography, Justin Kaplan attempts "to look for the biographically rational line of development that led from the journalist-loafer to the incomparable poet." By his orchestration of detail, Kaplan shows us not one or two sources for Whitman's images and innovations but a thousand sources, amounting to a background. Kaplan is a superb biographer who understands the poignancy of exactness.

SR's Phoenix Code
- Outstanding
- Excellent
- Good
- Notable

Film

Nine to Five. Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, and Dolly Parton are delightful as three corporation employees who break out of their "pink-collar ghetto" and prove that revenge is funny as well as sweet. Far from the simplistic Women's Lib movie one might expect, Colin Higgins's comedy takes off with his stars' talents and the director's offbeat wit.

The Formula. This Steve Shagan thriller about the search for the Nazis' synthetic-fuel formula is given special class by George C. Scott's tenacious detective, Marlon Brando's wry portrait of a man who's made customers of us all, and its European locales.

Theater

The Pirates of Penzance (Uris Theater, New York City). Director Wilford Leach and music director William Elliott set an overall tone of intelligence and charm. This *Pirates* has been put together by contemporary Americans who love and respect the work but who will not try to mimic Victorian Englishmen or their descendents. Unapologetically starring

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pop singers Linda Ronstadt as Mabel and Rex Smith as Frederic.

The Elephant Man (Booth Theater, New York City). The play—not the movie. An innocent but monstrously disfigured man becomes a socially modish figure in Victorian London. The play satirizes antiquated morality (always an easy target), but its humanity is honest and moving.

42nd Street (Wintergarden Theater, New York City). "Hear the beat/of dancing feet," says the title song, and never did a lyric fix a show's essence more neatly. Choreographed by the late Gower Champion on Thirties models, the brisk tappings carry us along on a pleasant tide of nostalgia. The show is just chunks of agreeable stuff that make us feel things were better back then.

Records

Carmina Burana, Orff (Angel). Riccardo Muti, conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, pounces on this warhorse, sinks in this talons, and bears it passionately aloft.

Les Elements, Rebel and Destouches (L'Oiseau Lyre). Christopher Hogwood conducts the Academy of Ancient Music. These minor figures of the French baroque each composed ballets about the elements. Earth, water, fire, and air all make appearances dressed up as descriptive chaconnes and minuets, but the most splendid imitation of nature is Rebel's "Chaos," a harmonic no-man's land way ahead of its time.

Facade, Walton (Candide). Narrator Janet Bookspan brings an American accent and sass to Edith Sitwell's very British poetic abstractions. It works: Sitwell sounds fresh and funny. David Epstein conducts the MIT Symphony.

Violin Concertos No. 3 and 4, Mozart (Argo). The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields buoyantly supports its new leader, Iona Brown, whose superb fiddling is distinguished by impeccable intonation and great energy.

String Quartets, Tchaikovsky and Verdi (Deutsche Grammophon). The Amadeus Quartet. Tchaikovsky wrote his when he was young, and the Andante made Tolstoy weep. Verdi wrote his when he was old, and the cello melody in the scherzo made us hum.

Art

Joseph Cornell (Museum of Modern Art, New York City). Cornell, who died in 1973, was American art's most notable loner. He is best known for his glass-faced boxes, each one of which is a haunting, enigmatic microcosm. More of these objects are on view here than in any previous exhibition—or, very likely, in any exhibition to come. The Modern always tries to be definitive. This time it succeeded. There is also a large sampling of Cornell's collages and toys. (Through January 20.)

Edward Hopper Retrospective (Whitney Museum of Art, New York City). Throughout his long career Hopper remained entranced by the bleak and powerful light of solitude in the American countryside, along the New England shore, and in the heart of our largest cities. In this exhibition, the largest so far for this major American visionary, well-known favorites—"Nighthawks," "Office at Night"—get strong competition from numerous lesser known works of remarkable power, and Hopper's preparatory sketches. (Through January 18.)

Romaine Brooks (National Collection of Fine Arts, Washington, D.C.) An eccentric, often isolated figure in the art circles of Europe between the wars, American painter Romaine Brooks has recently entered into the pantheon of feminist heroines. This selection of her work is highlighted by stark, effectively dramatic self-portraits. (Through February 28.)

Photography

André Kertész (Eclipse Gallery, Boulder, Colorado). When the 35-millimeter camera was first made available in the late Twenties, Hungarian-born Kertész seemed to understand its particular powers with intuitive brilliance, and his astonishing, contrapuntal masterpieces changed the direction of photography forever. Still working hard at 82, Kertész seems as revolutionary and new as ever. (Through February 14.)

Clarence John Laughlin (The Atlanta Gallery of Photography). Southern writers tend to benefit from their geographic designation, but southern photographers are usually dismissed as regional. Though Laughlin is a quirky master whose preoccupations are exclusively southern, his vision is universal. (January 9 through February 14.)

Carleton Watkins (The Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth). Of the many remarkable prototypical photojournalists assembled by Mathew Brady to record the Civil War, Watkins was perhaps the most gifted. His later career as a frontier photographer and his high craft have made his work hotly sought after by collectors. (January 15 through March 1.)

Dance

New York City Ballet (New York State Theater, New York City). The final weeks of a 14-week season feature several performances of George Balanchine's version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (January 16, 18, 20, and 24) and the world premiere of an untitled new ballet (January 29).

Cleveland Ballet (Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York). Co-directed by Ian Horvath and Dennis Nahat, the company makes its New York debut in Brooklyn Academy's Ballet America series. (January 20 to 25.)

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George Wendt, rapids-shooting philatelist.

George Wendt, white water expedition guide, has found something exciting to do on dry land. He collects stamps.

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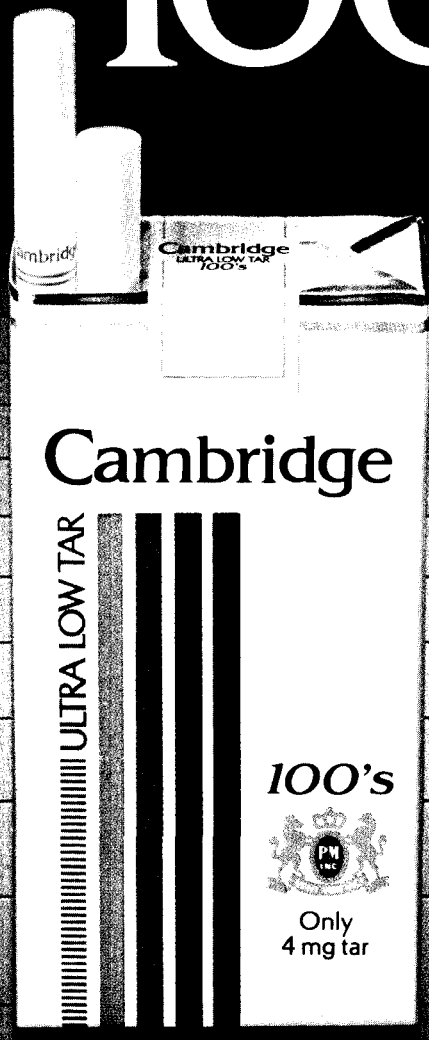

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